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THE FANTASTIC WAR in the Chaco between Bolivia and Paraguay, in which during seventeen months some 30,000 soldiers were killed, is to be laid on the doorstep of the League of Nations when it meets late this month. The League of Nations Chaco commission published on May 12 a report of hostilities and added a request that the United States join with the nations of the League in attempting to bring pressure on the belligerents to cease fighting. The Chaco war is ostensibly a border dispute, but several things tend to complicate it. One is that the munitions of war with which the argument is at present being conducted are, to quote the League commission's report, "not manufactured locally, but are supplied to the belligerents by American and European countries," and we know enough about munitions makers by now to be aware that if there is no proper market for arms in far-away countries, it is a simple matter to create a dispute that will provide one. The second Chaco complication is that in 1927 the Standard Oil Company, at the time engaged in operations in Argentina, left that country and became interested in certain Bolivian areas. There are reports of oil in the Chaco, and both Bolivia and Paraguay want the wealth that oil brings. Thus warfare continues there, while at the same time the effort toward European disarmament seems completely to have collapsed. The French navy met on May 13 in the greatest naval maneuvers in its history, and at the same time refused to consider any further British proposals for naval limitation. Every European government knows today that unless the extensive military and building programs already projected are stopped, war cannot be averted. Yet no country is willing to listen to the voice of reason. From the same munitions makers who supply Bolivia and Paraguay with tools to fight for oil that may not exist comes a stream of war materials that may very well destroy at last even the armament manufacturers themselves.

AS CONGRESS nears the end of its session, much ado is made about the legislation that President Roosevelt wants passed before adjournment. The so-called "must" list includes the reciprocal-tariff bill, communications control, the program for renovation and construction of homes, the Glass-Steagall industrial-aid bill, and extension of the bank-deposit-guaranty bill. Yet it makes no provision for adequate relief for the coming year by including the La Follette relief bill. The President's budget calls for $1,322,000,000 for the twin purposes of recovery and relief, but labor, consumers', and unemployed organizations are uniting to protest that this is not enough, inasmuch as industry has failed to absorb anything like the expected number of jobless and the end of the Civil Works Administration has thrown millions back on the relief lists. These groups do not expect the Administration to go the whole hog and call for the ten billions Senator La Follette thinks necessary, but they believe that anything short of half that amount will mean continued evictions, undernourishment, and widespread suffering. The breakdown of State and municipal relief programs in many quarters gives sinister emphasis to this prediction. In spite of statistics of business improvement, relief rolls are still mounting all over the country and the government will have to stop trusting to future upturn and do something.

TURMOIL IN OHIO growing out of the inadequacy of government relief is increasing rather than subsiding, but as the trouble cannot be attributed to either Communists or aliens, the press is handling the news like a hot potato, and little information is penetrating beyond the State. There is acute dissatisfaction among persons on relief because of the slimness of the dole, and a belief that there is widespread graft in the administration of it. The Ohio Unemployed League, which is leading in the agitation against conditions, is calling for fifty cents an hour on relief work, and there are many strikes among regularly employed industrial workers dissatisfied with low pay, as well as among those on relief pay. The National Guard has been ordered into service and is ruthlessly trying to suppress all demonstrations. According to recent word, sixteen men were in jail in Meigs County, without charges, and thirty-five in Butler County. William Reich, educational director of the Ohio Unemployed League, has been fined $25 and sent to jail for thirty days on what is said to be a framed charge of resisting an officer. In Toledo an unemployed league was

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enjoined along with a union of the American Federation of Labor for cooperating in a strike in the plants of the Bingham Stamping Company and the Auto Lite Company. Ted Selander and Sam Pollock, officers of the Lucas County Unemployed League, wrote Judge Stuart courageously that they intended to violate the injunction against picketing "as an abrogation of democratic rights, contrary to our constitution of liberties and contravening the spirit and letter of Section 7-a of the NIRA." They picketed, were imprisoned, and later were released on bail for trial.

AN UNPLEASANT ATMOSPHERE of mystery surrounds the resignation of Willard L. Thorp as Director of the Department of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. His appointment, made last summer, recently failed of confirmation in the Senate Commerce Committee. The President thereupon withdrew Dr. Thorp's name and Dr. Thorp handed in his resignation. But these simple facts conceal ugly political suspicions. Dr. Thorp was appointed to office at a time when the bureau was undergoing a general overhauling. An excellent economist with no political connections or ambitions, he represented the best side of this many-sided Administration. He has proved himself to be able and honest and uninterested in the strategic parceling out of patronage. Internal politics of a peculiarly devious sort are responsible for Dr. Thorp's downfall; the opposition to him has had its source inside the bureau. John Dickinson, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, attributes Dr. Thorp's withdrawal to "fabricated and untruthful charges of a miserable, petty partisan character, which have been persistently circulated against him by a very small clique of disappointed office-seekers, at least one of them closely associated with the Hoover Administration." But other advices indicate that the clique in question, predominantly Democratic, has been engaged in the grateful task of clearing the bureau of Republican appointees and civil-service men. That Mr. Dickinson disapproves of the removal of Dr. Thorp there can be no doubt. Why, then, did he not stop the underground maneuverings that brought about this result? And why did the President not use his influence to keep an able man appointed by himself in an office that sorely needed him? This is one of the least savory episodes in the political record of the Roosevelt Administration to date.

LIKE OTHER SPITE FENCES, the Johnson Act is turning out to be chiefly harmful to the builder. Not only is it destined, for the present at least, to shut our merchandise out of the Russian market, but it is going to stop even the slight driblet of money that has been coming in from our European debtors. The Administration has interpreted the law to mean that although the nations which made "token payments" at the beginning of this year are not in default—because of a special understanding at that time—no such position can be taken in regard to the next half-yearly instalments. In the circumstances the nations concerned have decided to suspend payments altogether. Why, they ask naturally, should we pay anything if in return we are only to be called bad names and told that American citizens may lend us no further money? Thus henceforth America will get debt payments only from Finland, the sole nation which has been paying its instalments in full. Meanwhile American citizens, forbidden now to lend money to Great Britain and France, may be led to invest their funds in more dubious quarters, while it is suggested also that the United States, which became the center of finance in the World War, may see England again assume that role. Our self-righteous Congress—which passed the law by which the United States has already repudiated 40 per cent of its own debt by devaluation of the dollar—has had its little gesture of small-boy petulance. Isn't it time now to return to sober sense and repeal a law which can only increase ill-will against us and further damage our already curtailed export trade?

WHILE the Agricultural Adjustment Adminstration (aided by the Midwest drought) still plans for the control of farm production, consumers' organizations, which have been a thorn in the side of the price-fixing scheme, have come forward with new evidence that the trouble lies in distribution, and that the gap between producer and consumer prices continues to be exorbitantly wide. Senator Lynn J. Frazier of North Dakota has introduced a bill seeking to set up a $120,000,000 federal marketing corporation for the purchase and sale of farm products and to regulate the price spread for the benefit of both producer and consumer. At a hearing on the bill (backed in the House by James Sinclair, also of North Dakota) Frederic C. Howe, Consumers' Counsel of the AAA, revealed that in 1932 the producer received only thirty-three cents of the consumer's dollar while the remainder went to processor and distributor. Norman Thomas declared he saw in this socialization of farm-products marketing machinery the way to bring order out of agricultural chaos and to stop marketing which was solely for the benefit of speculators in commodities. William E. O'Donnell of the Emergency Conference of Consumer Organizations, representing 400,000 consumers, warned that unless some such solution were found for the milk situation, there would result a combined producer-consumer strike against the monopolistic price-fixing of the milk trust. Despite the extreme indifference with which the press and governmental agencies regard the bill, it is evident that it gets at one of the fundamental difficulties because of which the NRA and the AAA are floundering in deep water.

THE New York parole bill, awaiting Governor Lehman's signature as this is written, is in line with the more progressive and enlightened conception of the proper treatment of criminals. The bill makes prisoners eligible for parole after serving two years of their sentence if they are first offenders, half their sentence if they are second offenders, two-thirds of their sentence if they are third offenders. Major General O'Ryan, New York City's Police Commissioner, energetically opposed the bill on the ground that it would make all potential criminals think they could get out of jail after two years. But of course the bill justifies no such expectation. Indeed, it merely goes a little farther in the direction which the New York Parole Board has been taking for some years, with the object of rehabilitating offenders instead of merely punishing them. At the same time that hearings on the New York parole bill were being held, the Congress of the United States was rushing through a series of ten anti-crime bills with hardly more than a glance at each one. The bills are designed to give officers of the law greater power in dealing with kidnappers, gangsters, and so on. One of them, the so-called Lindbergh kidnapping

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measure, provides death as the penalty for kidnappers who take their victims across State lines. Other bills deal with rewards for criminal arrests and with methods for apprehending suspects. The general nature of the legislation can be shown by the remark of Representative Hatton W. Sumners of Texas, who described one of the bills as "an authorization for the Attorney-General to pick a man who hasn't been tried and offer a reward for shooting him down." As a whole the bills are hysterically harsh in their provisions, and they revert to the old theory of criminal procedure, so discredited by history, that harsh penalties prevent crime.

IT IS CLEAR by now that the President's settlement of the automobile labor difficulties two months ago has not "taken." No sooner has one strike been composed than another has broken out. A recent manifestation was the walk-out in the Fisher body factory at Flint, Michigan, which led to a shutdown of the Buick plant. Nor has American labor in other fields responded more cordially to the President's new design for "social engineering." Within the last two months the lid has blown off among oil workers of Oklahoma; iron-ore miners of Alabama; longshoremen on the Pacific coast, in the Texas Gulf ports, and along the northern Atlantic coast; bituminous coal miners in Kentucky and elsewhere; gasoline service-station employees in Cleveland; and, of course, the automobile-plant robots in Michigan. Moreover, now that the silk-textile and the cotton-textile industries seem to be committed to a program of periodic shutdowns as a method of inducing reemployment and increased purchasing power, major explosions in these industries may be anticipated. If American labor is in a ferment of unrest, it is not because of the activities of professional agitators; it is not because the American Federation of Labor is establishing a labor monopoly. Labor, unorganized as well as organized, is reacting from the high emotional tension induced by Section 7-a of the Recovery Act, as the sentiment grows that what was once hailed as a Magna Charta is nothing more than another scrap of paper. On the one hand, many American workers feel that the federal government intends neither to promote the formation of trade unions nor to protect those that are formed. On the other hand, although the NRA codes have succeeded in raising prices, they seem to have failed to augment the individual weekly earnings of the average worker in purchasing power.

ORGANIZED LABOR knows only too well how the Clayton Act was early perverted by the courts to rob labor unions of much of the protection which Congress meant should be theirs. Now it appears that the Norris-LaGuardia Act is to be corrupted in the same way. Designed primarily to prevent the misuse of the enjoining power by reactionary federal judges, this law, enacted two years ago, was hailed as a great victory for those whose only device for forcing better working conditions has been the right to strike. Yet what is said to be the first injunction of its kind, against sixty-two former employees of the Laclede Steel Company at Alton, Illinois, has turned the force of the law against those whom its framers intended specifically to protect. This is how it happened: Encouraged by the collective-bargaining guaranties of the Recovery Act, workers at the company's tube mill organized a local in the Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers' Union. The employers, however, decided on a company union, and dismissed men who joined the regular union. The St. Louis Regional Labor Board heard the case and recommended that the company take the men back. Meanwhile there was the usual picketing and a minor clash or so occurred at the mill, but nothing which local peace officers could not control. Nevertheless, the Alton chief of police and the sheriff of Madison County joined Laclede officers in the federal court in declaring that the situation was out of hand. Sheriff Fitzgerald, who testified he had "only" eighteen men with which to maintain order, made the ridiculous assertion that 1,000 guards—about fifteen for every striker—would be needed if an injunction were not issued. This was held to bring the situation within the scope of the Norris-La Guardia Act by Federal Judge Charles G. Briggle of Springfield, a Hoover appointee, who at the same time charged local peace officers with being unwilling to shoulder their rightful responsibility. Many persons will find it hard to square the judge's criticism of the peace officers with his order enjoining the dismissed workers, yet he has recently made the injunction permanent. If there is any one group which should know from bitter experience that we have a government of men and not of laws it is organized labor.

SINCE WE RECOGNIZE indulgence in sentimental flapdoodle as one of the inalienable rights of the American people, we were distressed to note that Mother's Day was marred by two disputes—one over the merits of the Whistler postage stamp, the other over the originator of the celebration. We were especially interested in the discussion over the father of Mother's Day, because it seems to be a left-handed attempt to get a little honor for male parents which otherwise they would have been unable to obtain. Father's Day, as is well known, has proved a flop. It has resulted only in the giving of a few boxes of bad cigars and fifty-cent neckties—not in that great outburst of insipid fol-de-rol which has made Mother's Day such a slang-whanging success. Thus the only prospect of winning a little acclaim for father seems to be by tying him to the skirts of mother. The trouble is that as soon as we have officially determined the father of Mother's Day—and honored him—we shall have to go back and discover the mother of the father of Mother's Day—and honor her. Indeed, it may be necessary to found a society of the descendants of the ancestors of Mother's Day, which will vie with the American War Mothers in stimulating patriotism, sentimentalism, commercialism, and other national virtues. But first we must be sure we have the legitimate father of Mother's Day. And that may prove difficult. Apparently it is a wise Mother's Day that knows its own father.

WE stole the invitation below from the literary editor's desk. As an old conservationist we hope the publishers are making the necessary arrangements for the reforestation of the large areas left bare by "Anthony Adverse."

THE PERKINS GOODWIN COMPANY
and
THE TICONDEROGA PULP AND PAPER COMPANY
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MR. AND MRS. HERVEY ALLEN
and to attend the celebration of the
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Magna Charta of Monopoly

DURING the feverish days when leaders of the steel industry were discussing the proposed code of fair competition prior to its submission to the NRA, one of the lesser rulers asked one of the greater ones to explain a certain obscure provision. The latter replied without a moment's hesitation: "There is no mystery about this code. It just means that the industry is going to be run as it has always been run, only more so." The last three words furnish the key to an understanding of the steel code, and, indeed, to an understanding of the basic philosophy of the industry for the last three decades. This philosophy has always placed primary emphasis upon preservation of the status quo in prices, in production, in markets, and in the corporate and geographic structure of the industry. The cardinal sin has been for one producer to "get more than his share of the business," especially if the additional orders were obtained by quoting prices lower than his competitors. Competition in any form has come to be regarded as at best an ungentlemanly practice; albeit no member of the industry can claim to have behaved always as a gentleman should.

It is not surprising, therefore, that after a formal and hypocritical obeisance in the direction of collective bargaining the steel code should be concerned primarily with the creation of an almost perfect technique whereby prices can be controlled by the dominant interests of the industry. Even in these days of economic and legal miracles, however, it is almost incredible that this Magna Charta of monopoly should have been written into the law of the land with the solemn assurance of the Administrator of the NRA that it would not "permit monopolies or monopolistic practices."

The system for price quotation established in the code is designed to result in uniform delivered prices on any one product to any one buyer. It commences with the requirement that each producer must file a quotation on each of his products with the Board of Directors of the American Iron and Steel Institute, which is the code authority of the industry. Producers may not, however, file or quote prices at their own mills, since that practice would make the goal of price uniformity difficult or impossible to achieve. Instead, prices must be quoted at certain common "basing points" established in the code. These basing-point quotations are either identical at the time they are filed or become so almost immediately, since producers are informed promptly of the prices quoted by their competitors. In view of the provision for a "ten-day waiting period" before a new price can become effective, it is apparent that powerful group pressure can be brought to bear upon any chiseler who seeks to indulge in the unsportsmanlike practice of cutting prices.

If worst comes to worst and the recalcitrant member refuses to listen to reason, the most amazing provision of the entire code may be invoked. This permits the Board of Directors "to investigate any base price for any product at any basing point," and if it determines that such price is "an unfair base price . . . having regard to the cost of manufacturing such product," the board "may require" the seller to file a new base quotation which the board considers fair. If this fails, the board is empowered to fix a "fair base quotation" which "shall be the base price" of the erring member until changed as provided in the code.

When it is remembered that the system established in the code, of plural voting based upon volume of sales, is such as to insure control by the two or three largest steel producers, and that the government representatives who attend meetings of the code authority have no authority to veto or modify its actions, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the steel code not only permits "monopolistic practices" but actually establishes and legalizes a full-fledged monopoly.

The powers of the code authority are not limited to the right to fix prices, nor does the system of price control end with the establishment of uniform quotations at the basing points. From the time the base quotations are filed, the code itself prescribes in meticulous detail the various additional charges according to which the ultimate delivered price is automatically calculated. Price identity is further maintained by the establishment and control of resale prices on steel products sold through jobbers, by rigid regulation and specification of terms of sale, cash discounts, credit terms, maximum deductions, and minimum charges for "extras." Price-cutting loopholes of almost every conceivable variety have been foreseen and corked up. In every phase of the administration of the code enormous powers are given to the Board of Directors of the Steel Institute. It combines within itself the functions of policeman, prosecuting attorney, judge, and jury, as well as certain legislative powers, all of which in the aggregate give it absolute control not only over the economic destinies of the firms in the industry but over consumers of steel, transportation agencies, and, indeed, the economic welfare of entire communities.

The steel code originally went into effect on August 19, 1933, for a ninety-day trial period, at the end of which it was again extended to May 31, 1934. The NRA must now recommend to the President whether the code shall be canceled, revised, or extended. Assuming that the Administration has no present intention of abandoning its experiment with "codes of fair competition," three courses of action appear to be possible—all of them beset with difficulties. The steel code can be extended without substantial modification, in which case the Administration will find it difficult to refuse to extend to other industries the "privileges" which have been accorded to the steel industry. The Administrator can attempt to secure substantial modification of the code, involving the elimination of price-fixing and other monopolistic provisions. Or the government can confer upon the steel industry the status of a public utility, which would involve the same kind of control by it over prices and competitive practices as is now exercised over the railroads through the Interstate Commerce Commission. Obviously the steel industry will not willingly accept either of the last two alternatives, and a recent comment by General Johnson, to the effect that the code is in the main acceptable to him as it stands, suggests that he will not try for drastic changes through compulsion. That may be the easiest way out for him, but it is far from the best course from the standpoint of the public.

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Where We Stand

THE individual worker in industry made no appreciable gain in real wages from March, 1933, when the New Deal began, to March, 1934. His average weekly wage increased 9.7 per cent, but the cost of living rose 9.3 per cent. Hours of work were 2.4 per cent shorter per week in March, 1934, but they are being lengthened as productive activity increases. Over 10,900,000 workers are still unemployed. In February, 1934, there were more families on relief, either direct or CWA, than in February of last year.

These figures come not from sources opposed to the NRA but from the *Monthly Survey of Business* issued by the American Federation of Labor, which has worked hand in glove with the Administration. They are compiled from such stately authorities as the *Annalist,* the New York *Times* weekly index, the National Industrial Conference Board, and the United States government. From June to October, 1933, hours were shortened, the number of unemployed was reduced from 13,689,000 to 10,122,000, and the total monthly income of workers in industry increased by $200,000,000. Employers, in desperation, were following Dr. Roosevelt's prescriptions.

> After October . . . there was a change of policy in NRA; emphasis was placed on assistance to vested interests. . . . This spring, with production and business activity rising, profits considerably higher than a year ago, business men were far more able to shorten work hours and put men to work, but they are no longer willing to do so.

Between October and March, although business was steadily improving, the number of unemployed rose by 780,000.

We have said real wages did not rise during the year. But the profits of the first fifty-one industrial corporations to report their earnings for the first quarter of 1934 increased from $6,332,000 in 1933 to $18,740,000. Moreover, the Alexander Hamilton Institute points out that the value of output per man per hour in manufacturing industry increased considerably, both in the period of high industrial activity last spring and in the first months of this year. In February, the organization states, the value of output per man hour warranted a 13.9 per cent increase in wage rates. But the increase in productivity did not go into wages. It went into dividends. The survey cites a case history that is revealing. A certain large manufacturing corporation in the Middle West produced in 1932, 563,000 units at a cost of $752 a unit; in 1933, by increasing production to 869,000 units, costs were reduced to $567 per unit. The wage cost per unit was reduced from $254 to $197, or 22.6 per cent, and the value produced per dollar paid in wages increased from $3.02 to $3.32, or 10 per cent. But wages were not increased; profits increased from $16,500,000 to $83,214,000, and an extra dividend was paid to stockholders.

With such figures as these before him how can Mr. Roosevelt fail to see that instead of dropping the power to license business, he should insist that Congress renew it? He should use that power to the full in forcing business to divide its profits now that there are profits and to create the mass purchasing power which, according to his own theory, capitalism must have in order to survive.

The Drift in Germany

THE evidence is indubitable that Germany is losing ground economically and financially. On May 7 the Reichsbank's statement showed a weekly loss of 21,415,000 marks, 7,000,000 greater than the week before. The total loss in gold coin and bullion since January 6 is no less than 205,607,000 marks. There remained only 183,583,000 marks on May 7, as contrasted with 400,799,000 in 1933, and 851,110,000 in 1932. The Reichsbank's gold reserve is thus down to 5.4 per cent of its note issue, which is a record low. More than that, this unusually large weekly drop was semi-officially stated to have been due not to any extraordinary payments but merely to current demands for debt payments and imports. While the reserve in foreign currencies showed an increase of 620,000 marks, it stood, on May 7, at 7,409,000 as against 99,395,000 a year ago and 133,254,000 in May, 1932.

As a whole the picture is an alarming one. Trade with Russia is disappearing and the heavy gold payments from that country are decreasing. How much longer, if this continues, can Germany stay on the gold standard and avoid inflation? How, with only 7,409,000 marks' worth of foreign currencies, can she buy the necessary raw materials to keep her industries going?

From the large amount of data before us it seems plain that the standard of living is steadily sinking. There can be no doubt that this fact, together with the slackness of trade and discrimination against Germany in the world market, has come as a disagreeable surprise to the great capitalists who control Hitler. They thought that when he smashed the labor unions and delivered the workers in considerable degree into their hands, the way would be easy for them to build up their businesses. They see, instead, to their disillusionment that, aside from the armament industry and several other lines where there has been an upward tendency in response to a general world improvement, things are not appreciably better. The small mercantile establishments are not gaining, despite the disappearance of many Jewish-owned enterprises. Undoubtedly the feeling of the working people is, if anything, more favorable to Hitler than before. This is because of the undoubted increase in employment. While the working people are again having to tighten their belts, they take a certain satisfaction in seeing that the plight of the more prosperous classes is relatively worse than their own. Like everybody else, they are still being drugged by the almost overwhelming government propaganda, by Hitler's eloquence, and by the never-ending parades and circuses, and they have not yet taken in the significance of Hitler's admission on April 17 that National Socialism cannot abolish unemployment. Said he: "If we can succeed in reducing the number of unemployed to about one million, then we can consider the problem of unemployment solved." "And," he went on, "even if wage scales cannot be *essentially increased,* something will have been accomplished." Never before had Hitler failed to say that National Socialism would cure all unemployment and materially increase the level of prosperity. At present the official statistics show about 2,800,000 unemployed as compared with double that number when Hitler took office, but the figures have been juggled.

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So far as the export trade is concerned, March showed a surplus of 3,400,000 marks, a better showing than had been expected, but imports amounted to only 397,700,000 marks, 20,000,000 more than in February with its fewer days. As a whole Germany's foreign trade for March produced a deficit of roughly 20,000,000 marks, about 25 per cent of the exports being the subsidized "supplementary exports" paid in part by German bonds and scrip. The plight of the German harbors remains catastrophic, as the Nazi chief mayor of Hamburg, Carl Krogmann, recently told the German Export Congress. In one industry, the press, conditions are steadily getting worse. The number of daily newspapers which have disappeared since the Nazis took over the government is somewhere between six and eight hundred, and is steadily increasing. Those that remain are finding it harder and harder to live. As prosperous a paper as the *Frankfurter Zeitung* sees its advertising steadily decreasing, which is in itself an index of the general slackness of trade and business. The most amazing fact is that Hitler's own paper, the *Völkische Beobachter,* has a circulation of only 350,000 copies at most, while that of *Der Angriff,* Goebbels's paper, is less than 50,000. Since the bulk of the daily papers are mere mouthpieces of the government, the German people are losing touch with what is going on in the world to an amazing degree; they are rapidly slipping back into ignorance like that of the Middle Ages.

Who Gives the Pulitzer Prizes?

LITERARY awards ought to provoke discussion, but the most optimistic officer of Columbia University can hardly believe that the prestige of the Pulitzer prizes has been increased by the generally contemptuous tone of the comment upon this year's list of winners. The action of the Advisory Board in rejecting the recommendation of its own play jury seemed merely a petty discourtesy to the men who had agreed to serve, but there is cause for much graver complaint against the action of the university in choosing to designate Herbert Agar's "The People's Choice" as the most valuable historical work of the year, and an almost illiterate effusion from the *News Telegraph* of Atlantic, Iowa, as the finest example of "distinguished editorial writing." If either exhibited conspicuous intellectual power or literary merit, it might reasonably be supposed that they were chosen because of one or both of these qualities; but since the works are, by common consent, mediocre or worse, one can only conclude that they were deliberately selected because both express points of view which even many conservatives would regard as stupidly reactionary.

The editorial from the *News Telegraph* is entitled "Where Is Our Money?" and is devoted to the thesis that our present economic difficulties are entirely due to a desire on the part of the mass of the people for a high standard of living. We are, says the author in his distinguished literary style, now being led to believe "that all would be jake" if we would only follow the wild suggestions of the present Administration; and he concludes with this wise answer to the problem of want in the midst of plenty: "Where is our money? We spent it."

Mr. Agar's book is ostensibly a study of all the past Presidents of the United States. Actually it is an attempt to argue that the stature of these Presidents has steadily diminished and that the only salvation for the country lies in the establishment of some sort of oligarchy. At the time of its publication the work was described by *The Nation's* reviewer as a plea for fascism, but even conservative newspapers were bound to treat it as a piece of special pleading which did not convince. The best that the New York *Times* review could find to say was: "Reserving the right to disagree with many of the author's undocumented conclusions, 'The People's Choice' will repay the time spent in reading it." The New York *Herald Tribune* was, however, more downright. Mr. Agar has, it said, "by begging every question, defying logic, scouting historical accuracy, and indulging in reckless generalization, made out the worst possible case for his theory."

Who is it that thinks this book worthy a prize as the best piece of historical writing produced in America during the year 1933? Not, we hasten to say, the advisory jury for history composed of Professor Charles Hazen, Mark Antony De Wolfe Howe, and Burton J. Hendrick. That jury split, one of its members recommending that the prize should not be awarded and the other two voting in favor of another book. Probably, also, not the Trustees of Columbia University, whose authority is purely nominal. Who then? Ostensibly the Advisory Board of the School of Journalism, which consists of thirteen persons, including President Butler, Kent Cooper, Frank R. Kent, Rollo Ogden, Julian Harris, and Ralph Pulitzer.

They at least must accept the responsibility. But did they really make the choice? On the face of it it seems improbable that these men actually familiarized themselves with all the outstanding novels, plays, biographies, historical works, editorials, and cartoons produced during the year. The very fact that they ask advice from various juries is an admission that they recognize the impossibility of the task. But when they reject the recommendations of these juries, why do they do so and how do they make the substitute choices? Surely if the Pulitzer prizes are to mean anything, the public has a right to know. But it does not know, though anyone familiar with the behavior of large boards will hazard the guess that there is some power behind the throne. Julian Harris, to take a single example, is hardly likely to have thought the effusion from the Iowa paper the best editorial of the year. Someone with violent prejudices of an extremely reactionary kind has made monkeys not only of the members of the advisory juries, who have declared their nonaccord with the awards, but also of the members of the Advisory Board, who cannot escape their responsibility in awarding the prizes.

A literary prize can have significance only if it is one of two things—an official recognition of general public approval or the record of a judgment made by some person or persons occupying a definite position. This year's Pulitzer prizes are neither. Except in the case of the play award, none of the prizes went to works which have achieved wide popularity or high critical praise. What is more important, no one knows whose influence really caused the awards to be made. One more blunder equal to that perpetrated this year and the public will take the Pulitzer prizes no more seriously than it takes the appointments made to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

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Issues and Men

Dr. Fosdick Renounces War

IN "penitent reparation" to the Unknown Soldier, the Reverend Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, undoubtedly the most influential clergyman in New York City, has gone the whole way in his denunciation of war. He has declared that he will "never again, directly or indirectly, sanction another war." He added, "I'll see you in prison first." Remembering what he did in France during the World War, he used these words:

> I renounce war because of what it does to our men. I've seen it. I renounce it because of what it forces us to do to the enemy. I renounce and will not sanction it because of its consequences and the undying hatred it nourishes. I renounce it and never again will I be in another war.
>
> I stimulated raiding parties to their murderous tasks. Do you see why I want to make it personal? I lied to the Unknown Soldier about a possible good consequence of the war. There are times I don't want to believe in immortality—the times I want to think that the Unknown Soldier never can realize how fruitless was his effort. The support I gave to war is a deep condemnation upon my soul. . . .
>
> The noblest qualities of human life, which could make earth a heaven, make it, in war, a hell. Men cannot have Christ and war at the same time. I renounce war.

It is true that Dr. Fosdick has talked in this vein for some time. His Christmas sermon went far indeed, but not as far as this. At New Haven, too, he spoke recently to the same effect, but now he has burned his bridges behind him. He has taken the irrevocable step. Others might voice such sentiments and recant in war time. Dr. Fosdick cannot and will not. To do so after this would be moral suicide.

This is a cause for genuine rejoicing. And so is the fact that five former army chaplains declared at the same conference at which Dr. Fosdick spoke, in the Broadway Tabernacle in New York, that they would not again serve in that capacity. They, too, are tired of urging men to kill other human beings, and then getting up in their pulpits and demanding allegiance to the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill." We have the fact also, just brought out by the questionnaire of the *World Tomorrow*, that nearly 14,000 out of 20,000 clergymen have gone on record as saying that the church should not sanction or support any future war. The simple truth is that if war continues unchecked, the Christian church as we know it will go out of business. Lloyd George was for once right when he declared that if the churches of the United States and Great Britain permitted another war to come, they should padlock their doors for all time. There are some compromises that the modern church cannot survive.

Only a few weeks ago we had the student strike against war. Though it was pooh-poohed by the press, which played up certain amusing incidents at Harvard and elsewhere, it was a most promising beginning of a nation-wide agitation, and if its organizers profit by this year's experiences, it should be still more striking next year. Only one college president, Henry MacCracken of Vassar, was so wise and farsighted as to put himself at the head of a body of his students and march through the streets of the adjacent city, but perhaps others will follow his example another year. Only the other day I met a mother whose son brings home from Yale many of his classmates. She told me that they were eager to sit up until one or two o'clock every night discussing the situation of the world and their own poor prospects in it. I asked if they were radically minded, and she said that they were not, but that there was one thing they seemed to be absolutely united on—they would not permit themselves to be drafted into war, and they were working on plans for avoiding any such draft.

So we have had no little snarling in these last weeks from some of the few clergymen who still believe that the Prince of Peace can best be served by wholesale murder, and from military officers, who are naturally furious. The latter can never criticize their opponents without abuse, misrepresentation, and attribution of bad motives. What has become of the chivalry of the warrior of which we used to hear so much? Here, for example, is a Major A. P. Simmonds of the United States Army, retired, who declares that anti-war propagandists are "either too yellow to fight, or want to grab off something." This was in an address to the Government Club in New York City. Colonel H. P. Hobbs, Chief of Staff of the First Division, declared that the recent peace parades in various schools and colleges were "un-American"! It is un-American to preach against war and march against war, although this colonel and many others were called out in the last war in order to end war! Was it un-American and unpatriotic of Mr. Wilson to hold that up to us as the objective of the struggle?

Of course the reactionary clergymen feel themselves more than ever called upon to defend their position. Dr. Henry Darlington, that wise shepherd of the Church of the Heavenly Rest, who so warmly applauded the lynching in California last winter until he found that his congregation would not stand for it, and then decided that he had spoken too hastily, has discovered that "religion and patriotism go hand in hand, while atheism invariably accompanies radicalism and bolshevism. It is true, also, that pacifism has a passion for treason."

The anger of the militarists is perfectly understandable. They know that our people are quite aware that our going to war was a useless crime against America, that we got nothing out of it but misery, and that it nearly ruined the Republic we love. It must gall them to read that of the class of 1924, of Yale University, now ten years out of college, and therefore between thirty-one and thirty-four years of age, 43 per cent have just voted that they will not take up arms to defend the United States even if it is attacked. How magnificently encouraging this is!

Oswald Garrison Villard

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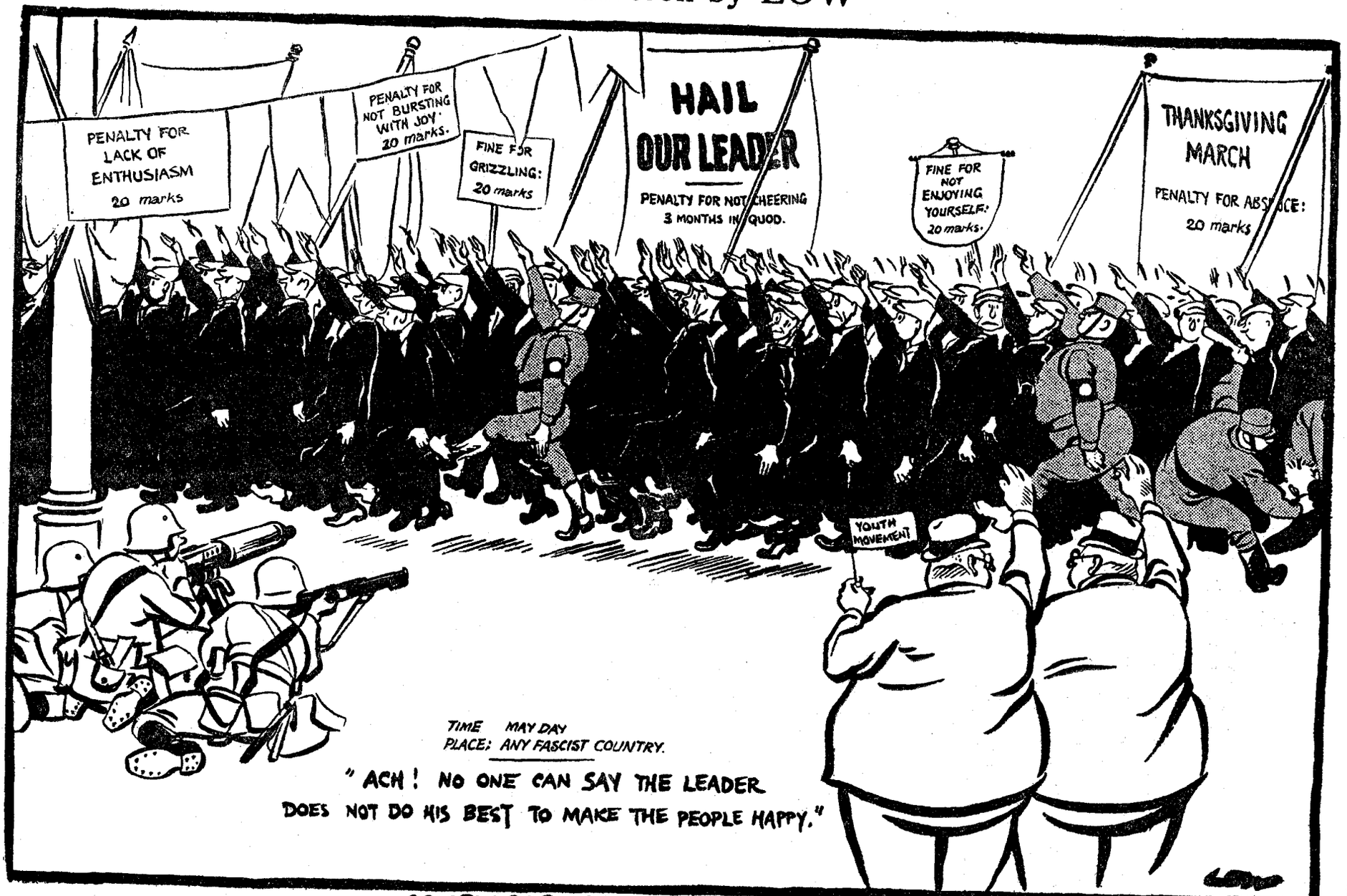
A Cartoon by LOW


PENALTY FOR LACK OF ENTHUSIASM 20 marks
PENALTY FOR NOT BURSTING WITH JOY. 20 marks.
FINE FOR GRIZZLING: 20 marks
HAIL OUR LEADER
PENALTY FOR NOT CHEERING 3 MONTHS IN QUOD.
FINE FOR NOT ENJOYING YOURSELF: 20 marks.
THANKSGIVING MARCH
PENALTY FOR ABSENCE: 20 marks
YOUTH MOVEMENT
TIME MAY DAY
PLACE: ANY FASCIST COUNTRY.
"ACH! NO ONE CAN SAY THE LEADER DOES NOT DO HIS BEST TO MAKE THE PEOPLE HAPPY."

COMPULSORY SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATION.

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The Dictatorship in Santo Domingo: A "Joint Concern"

By ERNEST GRUENING

BY the time this issue reaches its readers, a presidential election will have been held in the Dominican Republic. It is possible to forecast the result with absolute accuracy. On May 16 General Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina will have been unanimously reelected for another four-year term. It is the type of election made familiar to us by Latin American dictators. Potential opposition candidates are in exile or several feet under the sod.

Some fifteen years ago, as its more venerable readers may recall, *The Nation* exposed the American military occupation of the Dominican Republic. But of course in those days no one in official circles paid much attention to the "radical" *Nation* and its pleas for a different kind of Latin American policy. It is pleasing to record that under President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull we are now reversing those imperialist policies of yesteryear and establishing the kind of relations with our neighbors for which *The Nation* and this writer have been contending for fifteen years. Some of the chickens hatched during those expansive days are, however, still coming home to roost. In Santo Domingo, elaborating this figure in terms of a national pastime, the chicken has turned out to be a fighting cock, equipped with the long, sharp spurs that kill.

Dictator Trujillo is one of the products of the American military occupation. After the Navy Department in 1916 had swept aside the existing Dominican government, and the American commanding officer, Captain H. S. Knapp, had declared himself to be "supreme executive, supreme legislator, and supreme judge," the task of reconstructing the Dominican Republic and its inhabitants was for eight years in the hands of our military. Recalcitrant Dominicans who took to the hills for the traditionally honorable purpose of combating the invader were labeled bandits and effectively disposed of by our leathernecks. There were the atrocities incidental to "pacification." The motivation of the occupation was basically economic—to make certain of obtaining from the Dominicans the debt which our receivership had been trying to collect since President Theodore Roosevelt established it in 1905. The occupation's main objectives were, first, financial rehabilitation and, second, law and order—to preserve the new habiliments.

Some fearful and wonderful things were perpetrated under the first objective. There was, for instance, the $2,500,000 "four-year customs-administration 8 per cent sinking-fund loan," issued, according to its prospectus, signed by Lieutenant Commander Arthur H. Mayo of the navy supply corps, "by the United States Military Government at Santo Domingo in behalf of the Dominican Republic." The bonds were redeemable at 105 at six-month intervals. For those fortunate bond-holders whose bonds were redeemed at the end of the first six months, the yield was 18.91 per cent. Those who waited a full year received 13.20 per cent. Those whose bonds were called after eighteen and twenty-four months netted respectively 11.28 and 10.37 per cent. The less fortunate who had to wait until maturity received only 9.07 per cent. The bonds were of course guaranteed by our occupancy. Speyer and Company and the Equitable Trust Company floated the loan in the United States. Needless to say, with such returns on the investors' dollars, it floated like cork.

Under the second objective the powers at Washington deemed it essential to establish a native constabulary. This *guardia nacional* was officered at first by marines, with Dominicans constituting the rank and file, to be commissioned as they proved qualified. Thus began the career of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo. The marine-corps command considered him good material. While a private he rendered useful service to his superiors as an active informer. When the marines turned over the force to the Dominicans in 1924, Trujillo had attained the rank of captain. With this running start, and a native capacity for intrigue, he became before long the commander of the subsequently renamed *ejercito nacional*—the national army.

Of course the Dominican Republic did not need an army for national defense. Our Monroe Doctrine protected it against the invasion of any overseas Power other than the United States, as our long occupation made painfully evident. It should have been no less obvious from even a superficial study of the somewhat turbulent history of that insular country—a history not greatly different from that of other small nations in the Caribbean area—that to supply it with an efficient, well-equipped military force was sowing a crop of dragon's teeth.

While the United States stayed on in Haiti, our military forces evacuated the Dominican Republic in 1924 because our tenure there was becoming increasingly embarrassing. Its repercussions were encountered from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn. It was difficult to reconcile our lack of any legal or quasi-legal title to our occupancy with the lofty utterances of our contemporary Presidents and Secretaries of State. Having observed the fate of their Haitian neighbors since signing, under Admiral Caperton's "military pressure," the ready-made treaty presented to them the year before, the Dominicans refused to sign anything. Their president in 1916, Dr. Francisco Henriquez y Carvajal, preferred exile. Despite the phrases current at the time, such as "self-determination," "the rights of small nations," and "open covenants openly arrived at," it was increasingly difficult to present our Dominican adventure as anything other than a performance of right by might. So we got out, leaving the Dominicans with some additional miles of highways, some good new schools—for which credit is chiefly due to General Rufus H. Lane, U. S. M. C.—a refunded debt, a continuing receivership of customs until the debt should be paid, and the new national army.

The financial reorganization left the Dominican Republic with $20,000,000 of external debt divided in two equal parts of customs-administration 5½ per cent sinking-fund

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gold bonds, repayable at maturity at 101 and interest. Half of these were due in 1940; half in 1942. Their prospectuses declared that these issues had "received the approval of the United States government required by the American-Dominican convention in 1924." Under this convention, interest and sinking-fund payments were specifically secured "by a first lien upon customs revenues which the republic agrees will be collected during the life of the bonds by an official appointed by the President of the United States." Nothing could have been more secure.

Nor more reasonable.

To make it easier for the reconstructed and reordered Dominicans, interest alone was required for the first six years. Only thereafter, beginning in August, 1930, were sinking-fund payments in monthly instalments to begin. There proved to be a certain fatal coincidence about this date. For in that year the implement of law and order with which we had equipped the Dominicans ripped its way on to the front pages of the world's press. A little later in that year, by means of the same implement, the sinking-fund payments were suspended.

In February, 1930, General Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina, backed by his efficient army, declared a revolt against the existing government of President Horacio Vazquez, legally elected four years before. This kindly, elderly executive, who had conducted the affairs of the republic with decency and relative efficiency, knew what this meant. Hoping to spare the country needless bloodshed, he retired into exile. The plot to unseat him had been successfully hatched during the preceding weeks when he had been in the United States for a surgical operation. More sanguine and optimistic than Vazquez were Federico Velasquez and Angel Morales, who with a large popular following had been preparing to run as candidates for president and vice-president at the forthcoming election, May 16, 1930. They had been active in Dominican affairs for years and were respected and liked as able and honorable public servants.

The recent Cuban dictator, Gerardo Machado, waited ninety days after assuming the presidency to perpetrate his first assassination, that of an editorial critic. Trujillo did not wait until he took office. In the weeks before election Trujillo's soldiery broke up meetings of the opposition political party, shooting, imprisoning, and terrorizing those active in it. The suffrage seemed scarcely worth as much suffering as it was bringing to those who wanted to vote for Candidates Velasquez and Morales. On election day, to make assurance doubly sure, the army was in control of the polls. The constitution of the Dominican Republic forbids the military to be outside of their camp and barracks on election day. But what is a constitution to a Latin American *caudillo* of the Trujillo stripe?

"Stripes" may be not inappropriately used here. In his earlier days young Trujillo ran afoul of the law on more than one occasion. He was tried and convicted of theft, sentenced to and served a term in jail. He was convicted and served another term for forgery. For still other offenses his arrest was sought but he managed to escape punishment by temporary flight from the country.

His four years in power have qualified Trujillo for a brevet in butchery not even second to Machado. No dictator in Dominican history, not even Ulises Heuraux, who ruled the country with an iron hand for seventeen years until he was assassinated in 1899, is deemed by Dominicans to be comparable to Trujillo. Exact figures as to the number of his victims are not and never will be available. His opponents say thousands. Just who may be responsible when a public official lately in the opposing party is found dead one fine morning, his skull neatly cleft by the blow of a machete? Who can say precisely what fingers pulled triggers when bullets riddled a passing automobile and its occupants at dusk? The list of those, however, who have perished by violence at the hands of persons unknown and of persons known to be in the pay and employ of the President would fill more than a newspaper column. They include journalists who declined to sing the praises of the new master of Santo Domingo, public officials of past administrations who refused to accept whole-heartedly his new administration, *hacendados* who objected when their cattle were abstracted by soldiers with no offer of payment, students who expressed themselves too freely and adversely on the contemporary conduct of public affairs, victims of envy and of private grudges.

Despite General Trujillo's desire to maintain the most amicable and friendly relations with the United States, two among the many who met their death by violence during his administration, and from its authorities, were citizens of the United States. Undoubtedly someone blundered; the victims were Puerto Ricans—one a school teacher, the other an eighteen-year-old student. Presumably they were thought to be Dominicans, and therefore without protection or recourse. The facts about these two Puerto Ricans were not, of course, published in the Dominican press, which not only is subject to the most rigid censorship but is required to print fulsome adulation of Trujillo. They appeared, however, in the dailies of San Juan, the Puerto Rican capital, where many Dominican exiles reside.

For those who either will not bow to the dictator's wishes or are suspected of harboring resentment exile is the only alternative to sudden disappearance or violent death. In Cuba now dwells the distinguished Dominican poet Fabio Fiallo, whose impassioned lyrics and whose protests against American intervention found echoes throughout Latin America. Sentenced to imprisonment by a United States marine court martial for his pleas for independence, he was pardoned by President Wilson. Possibly even the days of marine-corps domination may seem in retrospect pleasant and peaceful compared with the savagery that now rules Santo Domingo. Five years ago Luis Araquistain published "La Agonia Antillana," with the subtitle "El Imperialismo Yanqui en el Mar Caribe." Written as a philippic, it is a pallid tale compared with the more recent "La Agonia Dominicana," by Buenaventura Sanchez, a graphic account of Trujillo's reign of terror. The family of Trujillo—parents, brothers, sisters, several of them with criminal records in the days before his accession to power—hold offices of importance which they convert into lucrative sinecures. A four-year-old son of Trujillo's by his favorite mistress has by presidential decree been appointed a colonel in the national army, entitled to the emoluments and dignities which attach to that high rank!

Sometimes it is alleged in behalf of tyrants that they are "practical men" who at least preserve the country's stability and credit. That for a time was urged by foreign concessionaires and bond-holders in behalf of Cuba's Machado—and Machado did pay Cuba's foreign obligations to

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the end. Trujillo, however, issued an emergency decree in 1931 suspending until the end of 1933 the sinking-fund payments of the external debt—so generously postponed by Uncle Sam until 1930. To this temporary suspension and violation of the agreement entered into under the American-Dominican convention of 1924, the Hoover Administration assented. The world was entering an economic depression which was felt severely by countries whose chief products were raw materials—sugar, coffee, tobacco. Santo Domingo, the capital, moreover, had suffered the ravages of a terrific hurricane on September 3, 1930. This disaster was very helpful to General Trujillo, who netted thereby $1,500,000 yearly wherewith to strengthen his army and to enrich himself and his satellites. The 1932 budget indicates that 25 per cent went for the Interior Department, which includes army and police, in addition to more than $250,000 for the "presidency" and the "executive."

When the moratorium on sinking-fund payments granted President Trujillo expired last December 31, Washington gave him a further six months' extension. These payments are due to be resumed on June 1 next. However, President Trujillo desires that the moratorium be continued. He desires even that the interest payments be also remitted. That was the earnest plea of Tulio Cestero, his representative at the Seventh Pan-American Conference. Señor Cestero was an active protestant against the infringement of liberty in the Dominican Republic by the United States seventeen years ago. His book "Estados Unidos y las Antillas," issued in 1931, in its preface contains a plea for the "spontaneous, sincere, and worthy cooperation of free peoples and independent nations in pan-American solidarity." How applicable to Señor Cestero is Araquistain's comment in "La Agonia Antillana" that "the silence concerning many crimes committed by a few Hispano-American despots has been fatal to the growth of an intelligent Hispano-Americanism"!

Another expressed objective of Señor Cestero, voicing the will of his master, was the removal of William E. Pulliam, the receiver-general of Dominican customs, and the transfer of the appointive power from the President of the United States to the President of the Dominican Republic. Pulliam was originally appointed receiver-general of Dominican customs in 1907. He left when the United States military occupation came in in 1916. The Dominicans asked for his return. They see in him one of their warmest and staunchest friends. It was he who originated the project of a pan-American Columbus memorial lighthouse which was adopted by the Fifth Pan-American Conference.

There are probably several morals to this tale. The most obvious one may seem to have a kind of "we told you so" ring. Another is that the "white man's burden" belongs to the late vanished era. It hasn't worked; and there are burdens for the "white man" at home which will consume all his energy. Eight years of armed intervention in the Dominican Republic have resulted in the most ruthless dictator in Dominican history, backed by an army which we taught to shoot. The old revolutions in Santo Domingo, as in other Caribbean and Central American republics, were relatively harmless. An occasional death and a few wounded were usually the total casualties of days of marching and counter-marching, with the firing of several thousand rounds of defective ammunition badly aimed. Oppressive dictatorships could be got rid of in those days with not too great a sacrifice. A successful popular uprising is virtually impossible against machine-guns, armored cars, and airplanes. So much for the democratizing, the civilizing, the spiritual results of our military adventure.

What about the material results? What about stability, solvency, and the payment of contractual international obligations? Eight years' occupation in the middle of twenty-one years of customs collectorship, to say nothing of the solicitude of an American commission of bankers and experts who went to the Dominican Republic in 1929, seems to be culminating in default. Default has become a relatively common phenomenon the world over, but somehow default and dictatorship as the net result of the expenditure of so much blood and treasure under the ægis of the United States seem a bit too much.

However, there is no use crying over spilt blood and lost treasure. A specific problem—to prevent future spilling and loss—now confronts the Roosevelt Administration, the Administration which has distinguished itself by inaugurating a new Latin American policy of kindliness and goodwill toward our neighbors to the south. It has pledged itself to abstain from intervention. Granted a policy of non-intervention, we doubtless still have the right to expect neighboring governments which seek from us loans, moratoriums, favors, and cooperation of one kind or another to be responsive to certain demands of elementary decency which bear on mutual welfare and joint interests. If American creditors are not to be paid, they have a right, it might seem, in lieu of material return, to ask that their dollars be not used to shoot down peaceful Dominicans, to perpetuate a loathsome tyranny, to enrich a horde of grafters. The Dominican Republic needs no army—certainly not the enlarged army of Trujillo. Any high-school student of Latin American affairs could have foretold that such an organization would become merely a dictator's knout. It was so in Cuba. It is becoming so in Nicaragua. It is a peril to be watched for in Haiti.

But what about a practical solution for the condition that confronts us in the Dominican Republic? In Cuba we had the right—under the Permanent Treaty—to send our ambassador to remove Machado, and only by that leverage was the Cuban dictator ousted. We have no such authority in the Dominican Republic. But might this not be the moment for President Roosevelt to put to a practical test his fine, epoch-making pronouncement of December 28?

> The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone. The maintenance of law and the orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is the concern of each individual nation within its own borders first of all.
>
> It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such event it becomes the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are all neighbors.

Such responsibility as the United States has assumed in the Dominican Republic, unlike that assumed in Cuba under the Platt Amendment, gives us no mandate to protect life and liberty. But it may well be that the mobilized public opinion of the pan-American family of nations might bring to a speedy end the existing terror and tyranny in the oldest of the Hispano-American countries.

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Bringing Shelter Up to Date
II. Unchaining House from Land

By DOUGLAS HASKELL

SUPPOSING your house were on wheels: this would probably change your attitude toward the land. The house on wheels is not being introduced here as a practical object. It is just an idea, which will give a change of perspective on our other habitual ideas. But mobile shelter is not altogether absurd. The earliest homes in America, much earlier and more antique than our "colonial," were highly transportable; they were tepees. We use them now in sport. Half in sport, let us examine our mobile forms of modern shelter.

We might begin with camping shelters attached to automobiles. If these could be made more comfortable and satisfactory we should be tempted to prolong the season. Corwin Willson of Flint, Michigan, has worked up the model of one into a large trailer, thirty feet long by eight feet wide, which, arrived at the site, opens out to shelter a space twenty-four feet by thirty feet—quite a sizable house. Mr. Willson thinks he could insulate it against all weather and take care of primary human needs in a modern way almost anywhere. Let us grant the assumption simply for purposes of illustration.

What could be done with this device? To begin with, in summer it would provide the entire family with a comfortable abode in the midst of natural landscape. A back lot could be rented from a farmer and the family could do some gardening. In the fall one might be reluctant to move. Why not stay and save city rents? Or easier access to the necessary road might be had from the owner of a wayside market, who for the sake of your trade would run out electric and telephone lines just as oil stations in California now supply elaborate and sometimes charming groups of tourist cabins. Having stayed one season cheaply one might want to stay more. If the neighborhood became unpleasant or there were another place with a better school, the family might move with its house. Such a shelter should be easy to purchase on the instalment plan, since it would involve no land.

These advantages in mobility to the adventurous have already been explored by more than one writer, but there would perhaps be greater advantages yet in the promise of mobility to those who stay in a single place and become permanent citizens. In "Recent Social Trends" it is pointed out that many families move simply because they have outgrown or outclassed their dwellings. They cannot leave the old house without also changing locations. In this respect houses differ from most other commodities, which can be exchanged without abandoning the old ones on the spot. This "difference" of houses is a direct cause of many vast areas of urban "blight," where houses left behind are weirdly used after the previous owners have moved away. If the house were on wheels it would be the house that moved away when it became inadequate, not the family. The family could stay among its friends and still live as it preferred. The friends themselves would be less likely to move away if their own homes could periodically be brought up to date and up to expanded or contracted needs without shifting neighborhoods. In cities, of course, it is difficult to conceive of houses moving about upon the streets, and a demountable house that could be carted off in sections would answer just as well.

This, then, is the residue left from our fancy. Demountable houses are in fact already being designed and made; they are popularly called "prefabricated" houses. They come in large sections of wall, floor, and ceiling, with fittings all designed to be joined together with screwdriver and wrench. Wherever shown they have aroused enormous interest. And still we have not reached the greatest advantage of all. With the shelter detachable from its site, the arrangements concerning the house could be completely dissociated from arrangements concerning the land. The house would gradually become a "chattel." I do not speak of the "ownership," because the new condition is so favorable to more flexible payments in the form of rent, which is payment for something in use. What, then, of the owner of the land? If we continue to think in capital terms, then he simply has to use a very much lower capitalization. His land has lost some of its former power as a trap.

So our sporting idea of a house on wheels yields a highly useful result, of universal application. It throws a perspective upon present habits that makes them extremely absurd. For at present we not only have all our eggs in one basket but they are glued there; and if anything rots, it all goes bad together. Because the house is attached to the land, one particular spot, so are all the transactions that are connected with it. If you buy a house you also have to buy the land. If the land already happens to have another house on it that you do not want, you have to buy that house anyway. Its "value" is deemed to have rooted itself into the ground. If, on the other hand, you have land and want to use a house on it, you have to buy the house; and so on, repeating the same awkwardness if you want to rent. But the awkwardness goes farther. Borrowing materials to build a house with is done on a "second" mortgage. Such mortgages are excruciatingly expensive, but in spite of this fact great numbers of lenders have failed. This is because their claim on the "property" is not only attached to the first mortgage, which covers the land, but is also subordinate. They carry both risks. So attached have all things become to "the land" that their very existence is sometimes ignored. Your first mortgage, the one against the land, may ignore the very existence of your house upon the land. The house is a mere "improvement," a legal "fixture." The mortgage may cover all the land "value" plus some of the value of the house, or more, or less; what difference since it is all one lump?

Dissociating the shelter as an instrument from the spot it occupies is consonant with general industrial methods. In "Shelter" Theodore Larson lists a few such devices, beginning with that familiar house on wheels, the diner. Then there are the "portable factories" of the General Foods Corporation, designed to overcome the difficulty of "large can-

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ning factories intrenched in one spot, operating only during the harvest season and then idle the rest of the year. The portable frosters operate continuously in all locations. Their potential worth is high, determined in nowise by land values in Florida or New England." The same might be said of the portable sawmill and the now familiar harvesting combine. All carry one step farther the process of delocalization, decentralization, which has already been noted in the effects of the far-flung electric power line. In their accounting all strive to enter the spot they occupy only as it is really occupied and in actual use. We are not arguing here with the economic "law" of rent. We are simply deflating its superimposed institutions and habits.

What, then, is the real-estate interest in the matter? We cannot go into detail but can give a hint. The real-estate dealer is today a very harassed person. At the very time when his business is flat on its back he is singled out for special excoriation, on account of past mistakes. He gambled, but who didn't? The difference was that his game left no retreat. It was a gamble in which conditions that might prove highly temporary were capitalized as if they would last forever. The real-estate game was one in which a deceptive ease of sale was coupled with the worst obstacles against putting land easily and productively into use.

Stubbornly the realtor today is trying to hang on to the remnants of his hopes. Housing experts are now telling him that he must face the facts like a man, repent of wrongdoing, and take his monumental loss. Making shelter mobile offers perhaps an easier way out. It does not require that the real-estate operator submit either to a sale which would reveal his weakness or to a boycott. It simply offers him an expedient device. Similar ones he already uses, calling them "taxpayers." A taxpayer is a low, light, temporary, easily removable structure that goes up in an emergency to replace the big hulks that no longer pay and are torn down to reduce the assessment. The little fellow at least pays the taxes. To mobile shelter as "taxpayer" the real-estate owner could afford to give a cheap temporary lease. If his old "values" return, as he fondly hopes, he can send it on its way. It was a right hunch on the part of the National Association of Real Estate Boards two or three years ago to back an experiment by Kocher and Frey in demountable aluminum houses.

Indeed, this move was a sign of intelligence, in working with the forces of progress instead of against them. Real estate has always had in addition to its gambling function a service function. This consisted of the branch devoted to building operations, then renting, managing, and maintaining operations. Building management has survived the depression the best of any real-estate branch, simply because it did perform a service. The old reliance on inflated land values for a profit is gone. Housing has proposed legislation against it, but we are here demonstrating the more likely expedient, namely, technical invention, which has already broken more than one intolerable monopoly. Mobility in shelter does not fight landowners for their land; it simply makes vast new reaches gradually available, areas too large for congestion to hope to inflate. Let real estate, then, get its living where it can, through service!

Not insignificantly the chief pioneer of mobile shelter in the United States is Buckminster Fuller, a seafaring man trained in the navy, and the structures that give object lessons in mobility to the house are found in the realms of sports, transportation, and communication. The sailor and the herder, from the point of view of the farmer, may be just roving, homeless bums; but their activities have their own continuous if not "settled" culture contributing to society. Their habitat simply has a wider boundary. The peasant view of the land does for a fact underlie most "architecture," but historically it has not underlain all homes. We have mentioned the Indian tepee. It was the home of a hunter. In Mongolia to this day there are nomad pastoral tribes that carry with them as shelter the demountable, portable, umbrella-shaped, and most efficiently streamlined "yurt." In an industrial society today we all have the need to move, not continuously but often. And the arrangement of whole regions must be susceptible of change also. The family need not, as we fancifully imagined, move with its house, but both the family and the house must be able to move.

Centered as it has been on gardening and regionalism, the ideal of housing has hitherto been able to operate in only one mode. And its own preoccupation with land—land as soil—sold it out from the start to the landlord, to whom, though for a different reason, land was the only "real" estate. When the literature of housing fights, it fights landowners hardest because it and they are contending for the same object. A few years ago the problems posed by the Harvard School of Planning were of this type: Given a certain value of land, how high or how densely must we build? Since the "given" values at that time were high, the results yielded fantastic skyscrapers and big apartments. Housing has since then to its great advantage learned to begin not with "land values" but with standards of use. In some respects, however, it is still reformist housing that is more reactionary than current real estate. The idea of "long-term" planning is so overdone that not only does housing want to protect one spot for you—by means of government ownership and zoning—so you can live there all your life, but it figures its amortization so low that you are expected to occupy the same shelter all that time. Houses for "lower-income groups" are not to be replaced or radically improved for fifty years. Building in the poor!

Though hitherto neglected, the ideal of mobile shelter gives us all a greater opportunity than before to occupy locations that are usefully planned. Here is an opportunity for unprecedented cooperation among a modern industry, the users of homes, and the housing planners. That any modern manufacturer building shelter instruments has a direct interest in their location and servicing, and an interest different from trap-tending real estate hitherto, I have already endeavored to point out elsewhere (*Harper's*, February, 1934). In brief, if his machines are to be kept going at a steady, efficient pace, then locations for the product must be as easy to obtain, as steady and calculable as, relatively speaking, have been places to park the car. Car manufacturers were brilliant and gave the politicians the idea that there was a public utility in hard roads. An enlightened industrialist would join Albert Mayer, whose articles appeared lately in *The Nation*, in asking government aid on problems of land, since he could not very well have his modern, trade-marked, streamlined product seen in neighborhoods marked by bad planning for decay and blight. And even a good contemporary plan, such as we can assume the projects of the Housing

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Study Guild in Long Island City to be, would not suffer from the possibility of later revision. A Henry Wright does not wait fifty years to improve on his previous arrangements.

By mobility there is introduced, in fact, the new dimension we have been hinting at in the realm of planning. It permits swifter progress in the frame of time. Planning is converted, as Wright has said that it ought to be, into process. A suggestive preliminary sketch by Lönberg Holm suggests zoning with reference to time: regions of high desirability being occupied only by licenses issued for limited periods. The difference is analogous to the difference between Archimedean physics, which considered objects as naturally at rest unless catastrophically disturbed, and our more modern Newtonian physics, in which a condition of rest, however extended, is simply a special case in a general condition of motion. It is the difference between the fort, the big town, the megalopolitan city, from which people sortie when in need of a gasping spell, and the weaving and shuttling that takes place along a web, dispersed over a rich continent, of highways and now of airways. The possibilities here are too vast for present comprehension. Coincident is the shift from a shelter as a mere "improvement on the land" to a continuously improving "shelter service." Such new opportunities make concerted action more important than ever, and it is the planner, the man with the deeper insight, who must make the approaches to the industrialist, who may see less.

[*A third article by Mr. Haskell will appear next week. In his first article the number of "miles of private transportation" a year should have been given as 332,000,000,000, not 322,000,000.*]

"Recovery" in Great Britain

By JOHN A. HOBSON

London, May 1

OUR national budget, with its surplus of £39,000,000 for last year (including reduction of interest from debt conversion) and with an estimated surplus of £29,000,000 for disposal this year, certainly bears testimony to some measure of economic recovery. But in a true estimate of our situation too much stress must not be laid upon such figures.

The exaggerated alarm of 1931, needed to put a National Government in office, enabled that government to make heavy cuts in unemployment relief and in the wages and salaries of public servants, together with increases in income tax which could not have been achieved otherwise than by dramatizing the financial emergency. Along with these cuts there came an economy of expenditure on education, housing, and other social services; a policy advantageous for balancing the budget but fraught with grave injuries to the life of the people.

To represent such a policy as conducive to industrial recovery is a manifest absurdity. It has cut down the incomes and consuming-power of large sections of the people at the very time when stimulation of demand for commodities was required in order to put the mass of idle productive plant and labor into operation. The measure of recovery that has actually taken place is in spite of this foolish and false economy, and of the policy of tariffs, quotas, and other obstacles to foreign trade which has accompanied it. It is sheer effrontery for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to allege that the economic policy of the government has caused recovery.

The available statistics for volume of employment, industrial productivity, transport, prices, indicate that a considerable amount of improvement is taking place. A slow but continuous decline in the unemployment figures began in February, 1932, and has brought down an average percentage of 22 for 1932 to 19.8 per cent for 1933, with a further drop to about 16 per cent for February of this year. This recovery of employment is conspicuous in most of the manufactures for the home market, a fact in itself indicative of some increased volume of purchasing power in the hands of the workers. Even in the basic industries, where the depression has been deepest, some signs of improvement are discernible since the summer of last year. Coal-mining, general engineering, shipbuilding, and cotton, though still heavily depressed, are not quite so hopeless as they were six months ago. But it is unlikely that in these trades, or in most others dependent in large measure upon export trade and foreign orders, any considerable advance is to be anticipated. Indeed, it is recognized that certain of our great export trades, in particular the cotton trade of Lancashire and the coal trade of South Wales, cannot hope to recover their earlier status.

Already the problem of "derelict" areas, where whole populations are deprived of their occupations, is beginning to get upon the nerves of the nation. This problem is not merely the result of lost markets, for example, the displacement of our Asiatic textile market by Japan. In no small measure it is the migration of old industries from Northern and Midland England to the South, and the establishment of new industries in the suburbs of London and in the home counties. This is largely due to the equalizing effects of electricity in depriving the areas of our coalfields of their former advantages of position. In theory, no doubt, the population of derelict areas should migrate to the new fields of industry. A Pharaoh would remove them en masse. But we have not gone far enough along the fascist road to find a Pharaoh. So myriads of unemployed families cling to the towns and villages in which they were born, where they still hope to find work "when the tide turns." Even the young who might and should migrate often prefer to go upon the dole in their native town rather than risk the speculative adventure of finding a job in a distant place where they have no friends or relatives. Of course, the migration of workers to new fields of industry is not the only remedy. It might be expected that new industries would choose the districts where decaying trades made large supplies of labor available. But both remedies imply a degree of mobility and foreknowledge that belongs to economic theory, slow of translation into economic practice.

Taken by and large, our situation, though better than two years ago, is very far from indicating a return to normal

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prosperity. In recent months a discernible improvement in retail trade has given a fillip to confidence, and so brought about increases of orders from wholesalers, and through them from the manufacturers, both in staple trades and in luxury trades. But the grim statistics of the "physical volume of production" during the past two years do not give much support to an optimistic interpretation of our general outlook. Though each quarter of last year shows a slight increase of output over the corresponding quarter of 1931, the figure still measures a decided fall from the relative prosperity of 1930. Some improvement is occurring in our internal markets, but it is offset by the deplorable reduction in our export trade in the post-war era. Records of the last three months do, indeed, indicate some slight advance upon the corresponding quarter of last year, especially in the import of raw materials, and to a less extent in our manufacturing export trade. But though it is boasted that our proportion of world trade is as large as it was before, the enormous shrinkage of the aggregate of that trade makes poor comfort of this boast.

Though it is yet too early to take full stock of the economic results of our turnover from free trade to protection, some interim conclusions may be drawn. Tariff restrictions upon manufactured imports have had some effect in giving British producers a larger and surer command of the home market. Where this substitution implies higher costs of production, or price control on a higher level, the damage to the consumer is, of course, contained in a loss of market to other trades. But it may reasonably be assumed that some industries have been enabled, by a greater security of their home market, to improve their plant and organization so as to furnish the home market with articles as good and as cheap as those formerly imported. But these are exceptional cases. For the empire preferences on raw materials and food will usually be reflected in higher costs of production, and in prices which cut down the real wages of the workers. Meanwhile the constant bargaining and bickering with our dominions and with foreign countries such as the Argentine and Denmark—with which our financial and trade relations have in the past been very close—are reflected in fluctuating prices and insecurity of planning. Indeed, the crossing of protection with imperial preference is producing the fruits which free traders have always predicted. Instead of cementing the unity of the empire, it is producing jealousy and discord, each section playing visibly and greedily for its own hand—the hairy hand of the profiteering Esau. For in Britain, as in each of the dominions, organized business interests seize the political reins, exploiting the sentiment of nationalism or imperialism, whichever happens to be more convenient.

On the whole, it must be admitted that our people have accepted this drastic change of vital policy without much concern. They fail even now to realize its two most important implications. The first of these is the passage into a sham state of socialism, in which the taxing system, flanked by a series of trade and financial barriers, is utilized in the interests of capitalist planning. If this government secures a long enough life, it will, without any formal fascism or other openly despotic rule, achieve a sort of semi-corporate state in which the staple industries will be organized with state assistance to operate as units of production and of marketing within an empire which shall be as self-sufficing as is practicable. Tariffs, subsidies, control of investment, joint industrial councils, and arbitration boards will be adapted to this end.

The second implication arises from the first. The isolated state appears at the present time the goal to which every nation sets its endeavor. But an isolated British Empire, were it economically feasible, would not be tolerated by other countries. The gradual extension of our flag to cover one-fifth of the earth has sometimes been regarded with jealousy by less successful colonizing Powers. But the preservation of an open door to foreign trade, enabling other nations to share in the advantages from the development of backward countries, disarms hostility. The discrimination now practiced against foreigners, the earmarking of imperial raw materials and markets for exclusive imperial use, are already arousing indignation in foreign trading circles accustomed to free access to these resources. Our empire possesses something like a monopoly of certain important raw materials—tungsten, for example—which are essential to the efficiency of machine industry. It is inconceivable that foreign nations on the same level of industrial development as Britain should acquiesce in the proposed policy of imperial monopoly or discrimination. Moreover, such a policy would be so plainly inimical to the interests of the several countries that compose our empire as to render further advances in this direction politically as well as economically dangerous. To take the most obvious example, can we suppose that Canada will conceive it to be her interest to jeopardize her commercial, financial, and social relations with the United States in order to give exclusive markets to Britain for such manufactured goods as she cannot herself produce? Her boasted preferences have hitherto been little more than the window-dressing of a sentimental imperialism. Is it possible that she would be prepared now, or in any likely future, to link herself up with any system that could figure as a self-contained British Empire? While, therefore, some little has been done to increase the proportion of our export trade with our dominions and colonies, this increase is due more to the financial and commercial disorders of our former foreign customers than to any serious approach toward a self-sufficing British Empire.

The improvement that is taking place in our industries must, then, be regarded mainly as a temporary recovery rather than a permanent cure. When a depression has gone on for several years, manufacturing and other plant is let down by insufficient expenditure upon repairs and replacement. The same applies to the more durable sorts of consumption goods, such as furniture and house repairs. But as time goes on, the need for this work of repair becomes so urgent that any reserves which lie in bank deposits waiting for investment are drawn into use for the reconditioning of industry. This is taking place in Britain at the present time on our railways and in our staple manufactures. Along with this renewal of private enterprise there is a distinct push toward large expenditure upon public projects such as slum clearance, rehousing, and the like, where a policy of strict economy was imposed when this government entered in office. Much depends upon the amount of courage with which this new policy of public works is pursued. The "public mind"—so far as such a thing exists—is well-disposed toward this more courageous policy. For the sight of several millions of workers with no work to do has become intolerable, and the obvious truth is dawning on our minds that though it will cost more to put these people to productive work than to

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maintain them in idleness, there are two advantages in favor of the former policy. Properly applied, such public expenditure will produce a public asset of considerable magnitude, and, secondly, it will maintain the efficiency, hope, and self-respect of workers who are sinking into despondency and despair for lack of an opportunity to use their labor.

There has taken place within the past few months something akin to a conversion of public opinion in favor of this positive policy. How far a natural recovery thus brought about can be more than temporary is quite another question. To those of us who hold that profiteering capitalism on the new world scale is no longer a practical proposition because it fails to accelerate consumption so as to keep pace with possible production, the policy here described can have no permanent validity. It can only bring a brief era of revival, activity, and prosperity, with an overgrowth of savings which soon pass the limits of profitable investment, ushering in a new period of stoppage and depression. But this longer calculation lies outside the present picture of immediate recovery and brighter expectations.

What Is Left of the Drug Business

By OSCAR LERNER

TWO or three generations ago the druggist was purely a dispenser of drugs. He used to prepare his medicines, which constituted the greater bulk of his business, in the back room of his shop, using crude drugs and herbs, some of which he even picked himself in the open fields. His shop had that distinct "drugstore" odor which was a curious compound of licorice, clove, ammonia, valerian, and peppermint—in place of the modern odor of bacon and French-fried potatoes. The druggist used to work long hours, but he led a peaceful existence, had the unqualified respect of his community, and managed to eke out a meager and if somewhat precarious subsistence.

During the past fifty years, however, the drug industry has undergone many radical changes. Several factors have been responsible for the transformation of the small apothecary shop into the modern merchandising establishment whose prescription business is only 10 per cent of its total volume. On the one hand, the rapid growth of the large drug and chemical factories and patent-medicine corporations has constantly tended to diminish the importance of the pharmacist in the compounding and dispensing of drugs and medicines. Physicians are "high-pressured" by innumerable "detail men," and are counseled not to prescribe the standard remedial preparations listed in the United States Pharmacopoeia and the National Formulary, which are universally recognized and accepted, and can be compounded by the pharmacist. They are urged to prescribe solely Blank's "specialties," for which Blank naturally charges two or three times the necessary price. The sure-fire efforts of the detail man are fortified by an endless stream of "literature" and samples sent free to the physician, who sooner or later becomes an accomplice without profit in this merry game of fleecing the public.

The patent-medicine makers are even shrewder than the high-class pharmaceutical houses which manufacture these "specialties." They have learned to dispense with the services of the physician entirely. Utilizing the newspapers, magazines, transportation lines, and broadcasting stations, they have, by buying more advertising space than practically any other group or industry, succeeded in making the public patent-medicine conscious and in loading up the drugstore's shelves with countless useless and even injurious nostrums.

On the other hand, the "modernization and enlargement" of the colleges of pharmacy has resulted in a tremendous and steadily increasing supply of pharmaceutical labor which has fairly flooded the profession. The colleges have been transformed into efficient mills for grinding out, with remarkable dexterity and ease, as many graduates in pharmacy as they can possibly attract. In 1880 there were only 1,347 students in the colleges of pharmacy, and in 1900 there were 4,042. The total enrolment twenty years later was 5,026, an increase which was in proportion to the increase in population. In 1928, however, the enrolment jumped to 11,125—an increase of more than 100 per cent in eight years. The colleges were directly responsible for the greater part of this increase, which they stimulated through fair means and foul. Note the excerpt from an advertisement inserted by one of the "better" colleges in high-school periodicals:

> There is a respect accorded a college man that is instantly noticeable. American industry has found the college man quicker, better trained for the problems of business than the untrained man. Especially and sharply is this true of that new giant in American industry—the drug industry—which today counts its annual volume high in the hundreds of millions of dollars. You will find the path very clear and smooth in the training for pharmacy at——.

The final and probably the determining factor in the present degeneration of the drug industry was the Eighteenth Amendment. This opened a source of tremendous profit for the average retail pharmacist, permitting him to neglect most of his less profitable business, which consequently drifted into other channels, into the hands of department, cosmetic, grocery, cut-rate, and chain stores. Moreover, thousands upon thousands of young men began to study pharmacy in the hope of accumulating a fortune from prohibition and prosperity.

The present status of the retail druggist is very difficult to define. One can only say that he is a professional man with virtually no profession to practice. In thirty-eight States he has attended a college of pharmacy for from two to four years, and in all States he has passed a rather elaborate licensing examination before he became registered to practice. These difficulties notwithstanding, there were in the United States, in 1931, 115,000 registered pharmacists and approximately 80,000 assistant and apprentice pharmacists engaged in the preparation and sale of drugs and medicines.

In 1930 the total annual sales of the 60,000 drugstores in the United States were $1,650,000,000, of which less than 40 per cent, or $625,000,000, was spent on drugs and medicines. Only $140,000,000 of this sum was spent on prescrip-

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tions, which means approximately $1,000 per year per pharmacist and a little more than $2,000 per year per drugstore. This business in drugs and medicines could hardly be expected to sustain the 60,000 drugstores, which must pay unusually high rentals and other overhead expenses in order to supply the public with adequate pharmaceutical service. Consequently, most of these stores, in their struggle for existence during the past few decades and especially since the depression began, have been compelled to take in many unrelated side lines, such as soda fountains, luncheonettes, candy, books, smoking supplies, and other general merchandise. And yet the average retail druggist—especially in the larger cities, where competition is the keenest—is finding it increasingly difficult to remain in business. Four years of depression have reduced his normal volume of business tremendously, while his overhead expenses—with the exception of labor—have remained as high as ever.

Contrary to popular opinion, the depression has not checked the growth of drugstore chains. In 1920 there were approximately 1,500 chain drugstores in the United States; there are at present more than 4,000. These chains do about 20 per cent of all the retail drug business. Practically all the chain drugstores, however, are located in large cities. These stores have been constantly perfecting their merchandising appeal and have gradually increased their general sales efficiency to a point where they are at present doing 45 per cent of the entire retail "drug" business in cities with a population of more than 250,000.

The general economic crisis has also been responsible for the growth of a new business—cosmetic and cut-rate shops which sell not only cosmetics but every item sold in a drugstore except poisons and prescriptions. Department stores sell every item including poisons and prescriptions. Five-and-ten-cent stores feature the same articles in special sizes that the manufacturers do not sell to drugstores. Ice-cream parlors dispense Bromo-Seltzer and bicarbonate, candy stores sell aspirin and Ex-Lax, hardware stores sell baby bottles and nipples, cigar stores sell tooth-paste and shaving creams and blades, and paint stores sell insecticides. Peddlers sell all these items on stands in the open street, and from house to house. All these selling agents, from the department stores down to the peddlers, feature these so-called drugstore articles as "loss-leaders" and sell them at cost and below cost. The neighborhood druggist has the choice of meeting this unfair competition or going out of business—and by meeting it he is usually successful in cutting his own throat.

Meanwhile, what of the poor drug clerk? There are in the United States approximately 60,000 employee licensed pharmacists, 15,000 assistant pharmacists, and 60,000 apprentices. What is their status today?

In the golden decade of pharmacy, between 1919 and 1929, while the average proprietor was able to make a net profit of about $10,000 a year and many were earning $20,000 or more annually, the salary of the average licensed employee was from $40 to $50 for a fifty-four-hour week. Employee pharmacists have been in the past unorganized, like most of their white-collar and professional brothers. Consequently they have never been able to make effective demands for regulation of wages and hours despite the fact that they performed a relatively important social function. With the advent of the economic crisis, the wages of drug clerks have been progressively reduced, their working hours have been constantly increased, and they have been consistently replaced by lower-priced and often less skilled workers. It has been estimated that after four years of depression 40 per cent of the employee pharmacists are unemployed. According to statistics collected by the Pharmacists' Union of Greater New York, among a total of 4,000 licensed pharmacists, 1,500 are totally unemployed. Another 1,500 are employed only part time, many at the rate of 25 or 30 cents an hour. Many of those who are fortunate enough to be fully employed have been working sixty, seventy, and even eighty hours a week, for $20 and $25.

The codification of the drug industry under the NRA has given relief to no one but the manufacturers and large cut-rate and chain drugstores. The independent retailers were not permitted to regulate or "control" prices, which was their only chance of immediate salvation. As for the employee pharmacists, they were granted a maximum work week of sixty-one and three-fifths hours and a minimum wage of from $13 to $16. And the $2,000,000,000 Drug Institute "recognizes that all are entitled as employees to fair wages and decent working hours." Fair wages and decent working hours indeed!

Is there a practical solution to the druggists' problem? The problem of pharmacy cannot be considered apart from the greater problem of medical care. The group practice of medicine advocated by the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care seems to be entirely inadequate to meet the needs of the impoverished public and the equally distressed members of the health professions. Only a system of compulsory health insurance, supported by the state, would fully coordinate the interests of the medical and allied professions and the welfare of the public, make medical attention available to the unemployed millions, diminish to a great extent the highly injurious practice of self-medication, and stimulate in its place a demand for real medical care.

In the Driftway

A CONSIDERABLE amount of applause has reached the ears of the Drifter for the objection he voiced several weeks ago to the fashion among daily newspapers of carrying over six to a dozen front-page stories to inside pages. It is true that not many managing editors have joined in this paean of praise, but managing editors read most of their newspapers in galley proof and so do not have to resort to the acrobatics to which other readers are put who are curious to know what She said to Him after their adventure leaves the front page to take its chances in the forest of wood pulp of the journal's hinterland. It has been explained unofficially to the Drifter, though, by one of the inner council of the New York *Times*, that the reason that newspaper continues so many stories from the front page to inside pages is in order to classify them there according to subject. This explanation is more ingenious than convincing, for if classification is really the desideratum, why should the principle be violated by spreading the material over two pages? Why not concentrate it all on one page? Actually the reason animating the *Times* is the one which the Drifter stated as true of all the press—a desire to make the front page a panorama of news for sales purposes.

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IN this connection one correspondent of the Drifter suggests that if the object is to put the maximum number of headlines on the front page, it would be a good scheme to let that page, or half of it, be nothing but headlines, with index notes telling where to find the stories to which they belong. "You can't call the suggestion impracticable," the Drifter's correspondent says, "for the tabloids are already successfully doing it; their front page is all display, with index notes." Although the Drifter has not observed that his campaign has yet borne fruit in the abandonment on the part of any newspaper of the carry-over habit, he is glad to note that some publications have enough of a sense of guilt to adopt an apologetic attitude in connection with the practice—after the fashion of the drunkard who resorts to weeping while in his cups. The Drifter notices, for instance, that instead of the usual blunt "Continued on page 4," the Seattle *Star* uses a polite parenthetical line conveying the request "Page 3, Col. 3, please."

* * * * *

SPEAKING of heads, the Drifter, who so far has miraculously escaped death at a street crossing from an automobile, feels a good deal more philosophical about the future since receiving a letter from a friend—lately knocked down but not killed—suggesting that one should not be bitter about the danger since death from an automobile is merely the "hazard of our age." It has taken the place of the danger that one would be tomahawked and scalped by Indians which our ancestors ran whenever they went for a walk. Well, the Drifter had an ancestor who was said to have been scalped by the Indians as a little girl, but a resourceful friend clapped the scalp back on the child's head and bound it so well with a black stocking that no harm was done. A wisp of black stocking stuck to the lady's head all her life, and helped to make her story plausible and picturesque to her grandchildren. The Drifter prays that somebody may be handy with a black or even a striped stocking when his head is carried to an inside page by a speeding car.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Radio Operators on Strike

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The radio operators on the ships of the American Merchant Line are on strike against vicious working conditions. Scab operators of questionable ability and experience are in charge of this important work on board the company's four ships. The strike against the latest wage cut of 25 per cent is being led by the American Radio Telegraphists' Association.

The American Merchant Line is a subsidiary of the United States Lines, which in turn is controlled by the International Mercantile Marine Corporation. Is it in gratitude to the United States government for the millions of dollars in mail subsidies which it receives that it thus further reduces the miserable wages of radio operators to $75 per month for chief operator and $65 per month for the second operator, and increases their hours of work from eight to twelve a day? Radio operators are now compelled to work continuous shifts of six hours on and six hours off, twelve hours out of twenty-four, eighty-four hours a week of nerve-racking, intensive work—work often involving the safety of ship, cargo, crew, and passengers. For this they receive wages which, reckoned in hourly pay, is less than that of the oilers or stewards on the same ships.

The radio operator is licensed by the Federal Radio Commission. He must have a thorough knowledge of radio transmission, radio reception, motors, generators, storage batteries, and general electrical theory, as well as of international radio laws and regulations. He must be his own bookkeeper and be responsible for money collected on messages. He is relied upon absolutely by the master of the vessel accurately to determine the ship's position by means of the radio compass in foggy weather. Often he holds in his hands millions of dollars' worth of property and the lives of all on board. Can a steamship company be strongly enough condemned for subjecting its passengers to the inevitable risk of overworked, underpaid, nervous, and irritable radio operators?

The operators, members of the American Radio Telegraphists' Association, are striking back. For many of these highly trained, well-educated men this is the first struggle against a powerful corporation. If your readers are in sympathy with the operators they may send contributions to the strike fund. Address the Secretary, A. R. T. A., 22 Whitehall Street, New York.

New York, April 25 HOYT S. HADDOCK

Everyman

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

On my return from Egypt, whither I went in connection with my work for the cause of international cooperation, my attention was drawn to your issue of April 4, in which it was stated that I made *Everyman* "an independent fascist paper."

In the early summer of 1933 I was asked by a codirector of the *Spectator* to take a small interest in the weekly *Everyman*. I told him that my time was so entirely occupied in advancing the three causes for which I work—(1) the unity of the British Commonwealth through the Over-Seas League, (2) English-speaking friendship through the English-speaking Union, and (3) the cause of world unity though the All Peoples' Association—that I could not be burdened with any more work. But if £1,000—one-tenth of the capital to be raised—would be of any use, I was ready to take shares to this extent, only I could give no time to the undertaking. I also stipulated that the editorial policy of the paper must do nothing to make more difficult my work for international cooperation.

I was away from London from the middle of July, and on my return in October from Italy the first thing I did was to resign from the board of *Everyman,* as I felt the policy was not in accordance with my work. It is utterly untrue to say that I made it *(Everyman)* an independent fascist paper.

London, April 24 EVELYN WRENCH

I. W. W.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The statement made by Samuel Romer in his article The Place of Labor in the Auto Industry, in your issue of April 4, that "the Industrial Workers of the World bowed its way out after putting up a bold front but losing an important strike" may be an expression of Mr. Romer's wish but is far from accurate. It should be put in the collection of obituary notices for our union that have appeared several times annually for the last twenty-nine years. The fact is that instead of the I. W. W. bowing out of the picture after the Murray Body strike, the active members recruited there moved to every major automo-

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bile plant and started the active campaign of job action that has been getting most of the wage increases obtained this year. In one department after another they have got the men to sit on their tool boxes while the pay went up. Total increases of as much as 50 per cent have been obtained in this way. It is a method much preferred to the A. F. of L. method of securing representation by showing union membership records to a dubious public body that also gives representation to the employers. In these numerous I. W. W. strikes on the job the management has been assured of the capacity of the committee to represent the men by the fact that work stopped during negotiations.

Detroit, April 29 F. W. Thompson

Young Poets Wanted

To the Editors of The Nation:

I am endeavoring to compile an anthology of poetry written by young poets aged twenty-five or less, and should be grateful for the opportunity of using your columns to invite any of your readers who come within this age limit to submit work to me. Poems should be original and previously unpublished. All work will be read carefully and returned if unsuitable, providing an international postage coupon is inclosed for this purpose. I cannot at present offer any monetary reward for work accepted, but if and when the anthology is published, I guarantee to pay for all poems therein. I further guarantee that no contributor will be asked to pay anything toward cost of publication.

Contributions should be addressed to me at Chetwynd, Burnside Avenue, Stockton Heath, Warrington, Lancashire.

Warrington, England, April 10 L. Arthur Halsall

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Finance

Large and Small Investors

RECENT Washington experiences have driven home to Wall Street and to big business in general the growing need for some method of mass political influence with which to replace the shattered slogan of the full dinner pail. Still possessing most of the means for direct pressure on legislators which previously sufficed them, the large financial interests have found their path at Washington blocked, in certain instances, by the antagonistic attitude of some factions within the Roosevelt Administration and by the growing strength in Congress of the labor and agricultural elements. The magnates have therefore turned their attention to the neglected potentialities of the mass of small security owners, representing many millions of votes hitherto unexploited by big business.

The public-utility industry was the first to flirt with the idea of utilizing the pressure which these masses could exert. It remained, however, for the Association of Stock Exchange Firms, in its frantic search for propaganda to offset the demand for stock regulation, to conceive of a blanket appeal to stockholders to exert their influence. While this movement did not assume the mass proportions hoped for by some of its sponsors, the idea of a vast investors' lobby intrenched at Washington to fight "radical" and "dangerous" legislation has refused to die. It has been revived at various annual company meetings this spring. The New York *Times* took a hand early in April with an article describing tentative plans for such an organization by "industrialists, investment institutions, savings banks, and insurance companies." Despite this sponsorship, the article hastened to add, the organization would be run solely in the interests of the small investor, with the large corporate backers contributing only moral support and direct appeals to their stockholders. The latest recruit to the cause is James W. Gerard, former Ambassador to Germany, who recently delivered a fervent plea that investors cease serving as a "football" to politicians and radical groups and organize to protect the interests of "the great middle class" against radical legislation. Only passing mention was made of the need for protection against Wall Street.

Such a movement, by playing on the appetite of the investor for larger dividends and by constantly dwelling on the argument that increased wages and possible restriction of prices inevitably mean smaller dividends, could prove of immense political benefit to the big business interests. To control such a movement, however, would require a skilful semi-fascist technique in cajoling the small investor into protecting the interests of big business at the expense, for the most part, of his own. A greater initial difficulty would be presented by the problem of finding a common political ground, satisfactory to big business, on which to unite the diverse interests of the security holders of the nation. This complexity of interest suggests the ultimate dilemma of the small investor. For, with the exception of the upper fringe of large individual holders of securities, the essential interest of the investor groups in the national economy is as consumers, small salaried employees, or wage-earners and does not lie in a variation of a few dollars a year in the income from their security holdings. Organization in their capacity as investors could benefit their position only by guiding an effective mass attack against the abuses of corporation management. Unless a spontaneous movement for this should develop within its own ranks, such an organization could hardly escape furthering the exploitation of the interests of the people as a whole for the benefit of the dominant business and financial groups.

PETER HELMOOP NOYES

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Books and Drama

Isolation

By CHARLOTTE WILDER

the days of that month . . . were blood
drops, one by one . . . coldly gathered . . . hanging pendent
to the twist of midnight . . .
they were dew
reflecting in the pearl shimmer
of their rounds
evanescent sealed static images:

the presence of those I loved
who left
stayed for ten days . . . I was in their
rooms; every inch was their
movement . . . the ninth, it began to seep
out . . . as warmth leaves a house, through
the windows and door-slits . . . and,
one certain day, toward twilight: I knew
they would never come back; this was not their
place any more; I doubted
it had been . . .

that evening, the sunset . . . was a sword:
it approached . . . and, bending fluidly upward,
laid only two parallel blade-cold surfaces
on my eyes' surfaces.

The Unity of Shakespeare

THE superiority of Shakespeare to his contemporaries was acknowledged by his contemporaries while they lived. It took more time, though not very much, for critics in the seventeenth century to realize that Shakespeare had been superior to his predecessors as well. Now in the twentieth century, 370 years after his birth, we can count up a dozen successors whom we are willing to call great, not to speak of a hundred whom in one way or another we like; but in all this time there has been no disposition to deny to Shakespeare the honor of being the greatest English poet. No literary title is more clear, however various have been our attempts to prove it. Each generation since Shakespeare's death has had its own special reason for thinking him great. It is the sum of those reasons, with much that has never been said besides—with the silent delight and admiration of innumerable readers and spectators of the plays—it is the sum of those reasons, expressed or unexpressed, rather than any single one of them, which establishes the supremacy of Shakespeare as a poet.

Shakespeare the poet includes Shakespeare the playwright. Shakespeare the man we know so little about that it is hardly worth our while to speculate as to whether he measured up in character and person to any notion we may happen to cherish concerning the kind of man a poet ought to be. But Shakespeare the poet is in his books, and he is not to be separated from the playwright. He is not to be appreciated, as we appreciate many another poet, in terms merely of his technique—his rhythms, his images, his dexterity, and his diction—or even in terms of the value which can be placed upon the things he said. *He* never said them; his characters did. So is his poetry not his own; it is that of those who speak it in the plays—Falstaff, Hotspur, Glendower, Oberon, John of Gaunt, Richard II, Richard III, Faulconbridge, Shylock, Portia, Benedick, Beatrice, Ulysses, Pericles, Imogen, Prospero, Miranda, Henry V, Romeo and Juliet and Mercutio, Brutus and Cassius and Marc Antony, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth, and Antony and Cleopatra. Not only is the poetry of these people, and of the songs they sometimes sing, supreme in itself; it is supreme also because of its appropriateness to them and to the context of their predicaments. Not content with its intrinsic beauty, it borrows all that beauty which comes from its being present in the richest, the most terrible, the most amusing, the most exciting, the most human stories we possess. This is not to deny that the Sonnets, when taken as poetry in the more limited sense, might in themselves make good the claim that Shakespeare is our noblest writer. Their skill is something to wonder about, and many indeed have wondered about it. But even they have been called dramatic; and in any event they are the merest introduction to a master who wrote a thousand other pages wherein live people speak their own poetry—equally fine, and immeasurably more significant.

Nor is this to deny the separate beauty of many a single line or speech in the plays, and the value of the thing thus said. It is simply to emphasize the fact that Shakespeare is a poet in the widest and deepest possible sense. He is a poet, that is to say, not only when he is writing his lines but even more when he is planning his plays, when he is feeling them and conceiving them as wholes, when he is understanding what needs to be invented here, what needs to be amplified there, and what needs to be suppressed in another place or barely suggested; when, in a word, he is letting his intellect work with his instinct toward the completion of some structure which shall be at the same time more intricate and more comprehensible than anything of its kind yet known to man's imagination. Shakespeare is as simple as he is subtle, as clear as he is profound; and this is because he is so completely and naturally a poet. He does not seem able to be anything else, whether he is thinking, feeling, or merely deciding upon the outline of an action, upon the propriety of an effect.

We flatter ourselves today that we know more about the plays as wholes than our predecessors did, and there is some excuse for this vanity. Our predecessors in criticism have studied in turn the characters of Shakespeare, the dramaturgy, the diction, the philosophy, the imagery, and the verse. Partly because they did their work so well we are now in possession of unprecedented riches, whether of fact, of cross-reference, of observation, or of understanding. We are free to spend these riches in an endeavor to describe the plays as the wonderful structures which they are—to note, for instance, that each of them achieves an extraordinary unity of sound, sight, and sense, and that within each one of them there is the most delicate arrangement of dramatic parts so balanced as to produce an effect at once sensational and natural. We have discovered that the unity of one of Shakespeare's plays is not to be found in the chief character alone, or in all of the characters put together, or in the plot,

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or in the poetry, but in the harmony of these elements with one another—all of them contributing to the expression of an idea for which there is no equivalent in our words, but which to a reader is quite as unmistakable as the quality of a certain day, the temperament of an interesting friend, or the truth of an experience. The unity of "King Lear," for example, seems finally to be felt when one perceives the almost musical relation of the Gloucester story to the story of Lear, and then perceives the contributions made to the development of this twofold theme by the landscape, the weather, the fauna and flora, and the voices of Edgar, the Fool, and Kent. Yet even that is far from all. So with the other famous tragedies; no analysis yet made has exhausted the tale of their precise and luminous contents. So with the histories. And so with the comedies, early, middle, and late—"A Midsummer Night's Dream," "As You Like It," "Troilus and Cressida," "Cymbeline," and "The Tempest." Poetically minded commentators have sounded the most brilliant resources of our language in an attempt to express and explain their glamor. Yet it is as if they had never been touched—they elude us as they always did, singing so naturally as they pass us by. We flatter ourselves that we do not say certain wrong or sentimental things about Shakespeare, as our ancestors did. We should not flatter ourselves that we can say the right things forever. Other generations will have their say, and Shakespeare will go on being what he is—the happiest, most copious, most complicated, and yet most comprehensible artist who ever used English words.

MARK VAN DOREN

Peace and the Arms Makers

Merchants of Death. By H. C. Engelbrecht and F. C. Hanighen. Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.50.

Iron, Blood and Profits. By George Seldes. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

IT is no disparagement of two excellent books to say that the most striking fact about "Merchants of Death" and "Iron, Blood and Profits" is their simultaneous appearance. Within a few weeks of the publication of an important article upon the same subject in *Fortune,* hard upon the heels of Beverley Nichols's "Cry Havoc" and Fenner Brockway's "Bloody Traffic," barely ahead of a related essay in the current *Harper's,* appear together these two exposés of the traffic in arms. The effect is almost sinister. One is tempted to ask why Messrs. Engelbrecht and Hanighen and Mr. George Seldes and Mr. Nichols and Mr. Brockway and Mr. George Gunther and the editors of *Fortune* and all the company of newspaper and magazine editors and contributors who have nibbled at the general theme have come to the same subject at the same time from practically the same angle and with approximately the same facts. Is it an elaborate campaign of propaganda engineered from some secret source so remote from all the ordinary cleavages of opinion that it can enlist magazines like *Fortune* and writers like Dr. Engelbrecht and politicians like Senator Nye? Or is it merely a journalistic mob reaction to an idea of such compelling journalistic merit that it has appealed to half a dozen publishers at once? Or is the whole thing coincidence—a few liberal writers following their natural bent and a few conservative thinkers taking a fling at the one capitalistic group upon which capitalists can vent their misgivings—with the two attacking columns meeting haphazard not only in theme but in time? Or is it all much more significant than that? Are these signs and portents? It was Ben Jonson who remarked that swallows fly low before a storm. It was Jaurés who talked of conspiracy in Europe in the summer of 1914 and whose mouth was stopped with earth.

One at least of these questions can be simply answered. The reason why all these books and articles, from the hysterical and superficial "Cry Havoc" to the firmly documented and soundly written "Merchants of Death," contain approximately the same important facts is that all these books and articles draw upon common sources and upon each other. Their authors have all read at first or second hand such works as "The Secret International" and "Patriotism, Ltd.," issued by the Union of Democratic Control in London. They have all read the pertinent League of Nations reports. They have most of them read the armament issue of the French magazine *Le Crapouillot.* And they have seen each other's work. The editors of *Fortune,* for example, had the advantage of seeing the galleys of "Merchants of Death" while their own article was in process. In addition, *such of them as are Americans have read the excellent reprints* of European comments upon the traffic in arms published by Quincy Howe in his *Living Age.* (Mr. Howe, who has received little credit, is undoubtedly the man most responsible for the entire American campaign.) It is therefore not surprising that all these books and articles should cover much the same ground. They all tell the story of the failure of the French high command to fire on the mines of Briey, they all recount the fantastic adventures of Sir Basil Zaharoff, they all report the venality of the press, the sales of arms to potential enemies, the interlocking of apparently competing concerns in theoretically hostile countries, the hypocrisies of the owners. Beyond that common core they differ only in their use of background. "Merchants of Death" is more scholarly and historical than "Iron, Blood and Profits." "Iron, Blood and Profits" is broader in scope and better informed about the general contemporary scene than "Merchants of Death."

One effect of this great hue and cry against the manufacturers of arms is to set up in the reader's mind a certain hesitant objection. A single book attacking these unlovely creatures makes its point. Nothing could be more contemptible than the desire to profit by the torn guts and blinded eyes of murdered boys. But four books and a half-dozen articles driving home the same indictment raise the shadow of a doubt. Is there not perhaps an almost indecent eagerness to make these men and these corporations the scapegoats of society? And is not the resultant sense of righteous indignation just a trifle smug? How, precisely, *should* these people be expected to act? Given the capitalistic system, given the armament business as one of many capitalistic businesses, given the expectation of making a profit out of that business, the rest follows logically by its own nature. There is an element of irony in the career of Mr. Krupp which is absent perhaps from the career of Mr. Morgan. But the irony is not inherent in the armament business itself. The irony lies in the pretense that that business, because it manufactures the tools of war, is in some way a business associated with the sentiments of patriotism. Actually, of course, the armament maker has no more to do with the sentiment of patriotism in his search for profits than any other manufacturer. He acts not as a German or an American or a Frenchman but as a capitalist. As the authors of "Merchants of Death" put it:

> Inventiveness produced a superior product and the development in technology made possible the mass production of arms. Immediately the problem of markets arose and tied to that were the further problems of patriotism and business methods. After some hesitation, Krupp decided that a strict interpretation of patriotism was injurious to business and he embarked on a program of world-wide sales.

It is only the hesitation—which does him perhaps no honor—which distinguishes Krupp from his colleagues in other lines.

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The mere fact, in other words, that the business of manufacturing arms for profit is loathsome does not enable the rest of us to shoulder our responsibility off upon the armament manufacturers. As long as the world requires arms it will require arms makers. And since few governments can manufacture their own arms, the great majority of arms makers will be private individuals. If we suffer them we must suffer their acts—and they will act according to their interest. The real problem and the only possible solution is to alter if possible the world's belief that it requires arms. And there never was a bleaker prospect of success in that endeavor than the prospect now before us.

One thing, however, of the utmost importance to that effort these various volumes have accomplished. The world can only be turned against war by teaching. Teaching requires the use of the radio and the press. So far efforts to use the press to that end have failed, and have failed largely because of a counter-propaganda of fear. These volumes make it sufficiently clear that the source of the counter-propaganda of fear has very frequently been the armament manufacturers themselves working through subsidized and dishonest mediums of news. Forewarned by that knowledge and supported by such proof as the proof supplied by Soviet revelations of czarist activities in France, it should now be possible to attack the problem of peace propaganda intelligently. Infinitely more important than the crucifixion of "the fifty men who run the munitions racket" is the cleansing of the press. If that can be done, the fifty racketeers can be rendered impotent. If it cannot be done, even the execution of the fifty would serve no purpose, for they would be replaced tomorrow by fifty or by fifty thousand more.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

The Lost Generation and the New Morality

The Unpossessed. By Tess Slesinger. Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

MISS SLESINGER'S generation, which she calls "the unpossessed," is of a slightly later vintage than the well-known post-war company of Hemingway and Kay Boyle. She pictures them in the throes of a desperate effort to face the new discipline of collective action. Whoever read her brilliant and bitter indictment of the jittery era in "Missis Flinders"—which seemed to me the best short story of last year—will have been watching for this larger treatment of similar material.

And how does Miss Slesinger view this new, regenerative process? In the main, her colors are decidedly mordant. "The Unpossessed" pictures a group of younger New York intellectuals whose social protest remains pretty much in the realm of talk—Lenin toasted in gin, as it were, revolution served up with cocktails. Though a few of her youngest characters escape arraignment, the rest come in for large doses of ridicule. All the liveliest portions of this very lively and readable first novel catch her characters in ludicrous postures: Bruno, the tired Jewish radical, mocking himself behind a smoke screen of vaudeville; Jeffrey, the sex novelist, displaying his technique of lady-killing; Miles, the stiff theorist, pursued by a New England conscience; Merle Middleton, the society matron, romanticizing revolution from the safety of wealth and the escape of psychoanalysis; the jazz-age Elizabeth rotating in a whirl of chain-drinking, chain-smoking, chain-loving. Even the minor touches, such as the ambiguous and embarrassing presence of Graham Hatcher, the one Negro at the left-wing party, have a finished brilliance of social comedy. There is danger, indeed, that Miss

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By Richard Rothschild

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Slesinger's verbal brilliance, her gift for juggling epithets and shibboleths, may run away with her. The bedroom scene in the Paris pension, for instance, comes close to facile smartness.

Since her ridicule cuts both ways, however, this tendency is generally avoided. But as a novel "The Unpossessed" betrays a more fundamental weakness. Perhaps the fact that the short story "Missis Flinders" stands as the last chapter, with the book built back as it were from that entity, accounts for a certain brokenness both as to structure and theme. Its unity is threatened by the fact that Bruno now competes with Margaret (Missis Flinders) as the chief character, and their problems remain unrelated. Bruno's Hamlet-like straddle would be solved apparently by the courage to lose himself in collective action. Margaret's probem is quite different: it is sex, "womanhood," and her salvation supposedly lies in the most bourgeois of resources—having a baby. And incidentally, Margaret's story is not improved by its larger treatment; a certain sentimentality has crept in which was wholly absent from the short story. But the main weakness is that these two themes—on the one hand a sort of D. H. Lawrence critique of sexual integrity, and on the other redemption by social action—run separate courses through the book and are never really integrated. As a result the book breaks down at important points, where "talk" fails to bridge the gaps in underlying structure. A number of scenes, including the climactic "party," have the air of tours de force.

It is nevertheless a brilliant and cutting first novel. Miss Slesinger is harsh on her "fellow-travelers"; she does not pretend that their redemption has been accomplished, and it is even implied that for some of them, in the words of Bruno, the revolution is just another opiate. This seems to be salutary rather than not, and it is a credit to her honesty that the book does not end with a wishful red sunrise on the immediate horizon.

FERNER NUHN

Flower of Manhattan

A Backward Glance. By Edith Wharton. Appleton-Century Company. $3.

AMONG the many crisp utterances on her craft which Mrs. Wharton sprinkles throughout this volume is the following: "There could be no greater critical ineptitude than to judge a novel according to *what it ought to have been about.*" For the reader of these reminiscences desirous of extracting their very special quality of charm and interest this remark is an excellent one to keep in mind. Nothing could be more foolish than to throw down this book with the objection that its backgrounds, its people, and its events seem lacking in vital significance to the harried and very much preoccupied reader of today. It is beside the point to make uncomplimentary comparisons between the author of "The House of Mirth" and the man with the dinner pail—that latter-nineteenth-century specter whom Mrs. Wharton quaintly invokes in one passage. The point is rather that Mrs. Wharton was the flower, the exquisite and certainly altogether undeserved flower, of a social group in America whose always tenuous existence has for some time now shaded off into oblivion. Daughter of Rhinelanders and Stevenses, debutante of the age of innocence, intimate of those frail and neurasthenic lovers of culture who flitted back and forth between Europe and America in the eighties, Mrs. Wharton was unquestionably affected by the moral and social values of the period and milieu into which she happened to be born. She would have been something of a monster not to have been so affected—up to a certain point. For like every authentic novelist, Mrs. Wharton was at once the product of a very particular set of conditions and the observer and critic of those conditions. What made Mrs. Wharton a novelist rather than just another occupant of a box at the Metropolitan was of course a very early perception of what she herself calls the "flatness and futility" of the society of her time. But what was in the first place responsible for this perception on the part of a young woman who had every reason to be admirably conditioned, as one says nowadays, remains something of a mystery. Heredity, in her case, offers no clue: her mother seems to have been a perfect model of her class; and her father, except for a slightly adventurous taste for Spanish travel, was apparently undistinguished by any special sensibility or intelligence. Yet sensibility and intelligence were both gifts which Edith Wharton possessed and which set her apart automatically from her family and her class. The weaknesses of her writing—the thinness of her most characteristic material, the increasing fragility of her point of view, and the still insuperable aura of gentility—can all be laid to her time and her class. But her strength is her own—the strength which enabled her, in her very best work, to pass so far beyond that conditioning process which is regarded as so inevitable today. This is the mystery which will not be found revealed in either the handbooks of American cultural history or in the gospel according to Marx.

If there is any continuous dramatic interest in these pages, it consists in the unbroken persistency of Mrs. Wharton's effort at emancipation—the old battle of the artist with the world. Contrary to what might have been expected, reconstruction of old New York, its manners and its people, occupy rather little of the book. Most of it is concerned with Mrs. Wharton's personal friendships with people who, like Walter Berry and Henry James, had made the same renunciations as herself or who, like the Bourgets and the Comtesse de Fitz-James, belonged by right of birth to the "richer soil" of Europe. For Mrs. Wharton's life, once she had decided to commit herself to perspective rather than participation, was necessarily cast on the more intensely personal plane of friends, books, gardening, and travel. But even these compensations were not tolerated when they encroached too much on the practice of her craft. Unlike Gertrude Stein, she found in war work less a romance than a distraction. And there is something half-apologetic in her account of the brilliant salons in Paris attended in the pre-war epoch. What emerges throughout is an insistence on the priority for the novelist of the claims of his craft over all other claims that might be made.

The question will occur, of course, how well this attitude is sustained by the evidence of so much of Mrs. Wharton's actual practice of her craft—especially in recent years. It is not an exaggeration to say that it is almost impossible to believe that "Ethan Frome" and "Twilight Sleep" could have been written by the same hand. Speaking of Balzac and Thackeray and Proust, all novelists of manners like herself, Mrs. Wharton remarks on the tendency of such novelists "to be dazzled by contact with the very society they satirize." But she goes on to justify them with the suggestion that *pour comprendre il faut aimer,* and perhaps this is the best justification that can be offered for Mrs. Wharton herself. Because in all her later fiction love takes precedence over understanding, the ambiguity that has always marked her writing is less productive of those qualities which we look for in the true satirist. But there is in the present work a kind of recrudescence of that old ambiguity which gives it a much more interesting quality than will be found in many works by authors who have more definitely made up their minds about things.

WILLIAM TROY

Buckminster Fuller, designer of the Dymaxion car, will review Lewis Mumford's "Technics and Civilization" in the next issue of The Nation.

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Clouding the Wine and Cracking the Bottles

What Marx Really Meant. By G. D. H. Cole. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

G. D. H. COLE is a clear-voiced and kindly teacher. His "Guide Through World Chaos" is a friend to the distracted mind, and "What Everybody Wants to Know About Money," planned and edited by him, is a plain man's key to modern highbrow conversation. Only an economist who used to be a poet could be so humanly helpful.

So much the more distressing to find him writing this new book, in which, through 309 pages of steady and unanswerable proof to the contrary, he keeps up the confusing pretense that his opinions are "Marxism." Nothing could be more bewildering to a mind inquiring either about Marx or about G. D. H. Cole. He disagrees with Marx explicitly upon so many cardinal points that he ought out of a mere sense of proportion to call his book "Where Marx Was Wrong." And if you add to these explicit disagreements the number of points in which he unconsciously attributes to Marx modern scientific attitudes absolutely alien to the philosophy of dialectic materialism and impossible for a Hegelian-trained mind of the last century to consider reasonable, the title of the book, "What Marx Really Meant," becomes nothing less than a joke. If Marx meant this, one cries out in a kind of amused desperation, why in the name of God didn't he say it?

Sidney Hook, I thought, went as far as a sense of humor would permit in pouring new wine into the old Marxian bottles. He not only abandoned materialism and historic determinism and the inevitability of the communist society, and reduced "Das Kapital" to the status of an "illustration" (and poor Engels to the status of a pupil too dumb to understand "Das Kapital" or the dialectic method), but abandoned also the triadic form of the dialectic and the universality of its application. According to Hook's version, dialectic materialism is a philosophy which declares that the world is not uniformly material and wherever it is material it is not dialectic. That was fantastic enough. But G. D. H. Cole, evidently very much influenced and encouraged by Hook's example, repeats all these heroic operations, and then goes straight on and throws away the only two essential things Hook left untampered with—a belief in the class struggle as a dialectic principle constituting the essence of "all history," and a belief in the labor theory of value as integral to its contemporary application. I have counted twenty-nine points in which G. D. H. Cole either consciously emends or unconsciously contradicts the carefully expressed opinions of Marx himself upon vital questions.

Mr. Cole himself has some misgivings about the nature of his operations. "Some Marxists will say," he concedes, "that what I have been saying is not Marxism at all. . . . Even if that were so, it would not matter, provided that mine were the better doctrine for today." It would matter, and it does matter, in just this—that it destroys utterly that simplicity and clarity of elucidation which is Mr. Cole's great merit as a teacher. You cannot pour new wine into old bottles without clouding the wine as well as cracking the bottles.

If Mr. Cole in the preface of his next book would quietly remark, "It was through Marx that I came to the point of view which I am about to expound, and although I cannot accept his system of thought, I owe to Marx many vital ideas and a tribute of affection and admiration," and then go on in the name of no "ism," he would greatly clear the air both in his own mind and those of his pupils. He would, moreover, be obeying a good maxim penned by himself in the poetic days:

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JIG SAW. Ethel Barrymore Theater. Antics of the pent-house set in a farce full of wit. With Ernest Truex and Spring Byington.

MARY OF SCOTLAND. Alvin Theater. Helen Hayes and Philip Merivale give fine performances in Maxwell Anderson's play. An outstanding dramatic hit but one which left me a little cold.

MEN IN WHITE. Broadhurst Theater. Fine teamwork on the part of the members of the Group Theater helps to make this play about a young doctor one of the things which must not be missed.

H.M.S. PINAFORE and TRIAL BY JURY. Majestic Theater. This week's offering of a good company presenting Gilbert and Sullivan repertory.

SHE LOVES ME NOT. Morosco Theater. Mad doings at Princeton which involve the efforts of some high-minded students to rescue a not too innocent maiden in distress. Much the funniest farce of the year.

STEVEDORE. Civic Repertory Theater. Uncommonly effective both as melodrama and as propaganda, reaching a really smashing climax in a thunderous scene "on the barricades."

THE MILKY WAY. Court Theater. Elementary but amusing farce about one of Mr. Borden's men who becomes a prize fighter by accident. With Hugh O'Connell.

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Next Week in The Nation
Steel Labor Grows Restive
By Karl Lore

Destroyers we create;
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All things that now are great,
Out of destruction grew.

Why should a man with this sense of how great things grow waste his time trying to read back into an antiquated, romantic German philosophy of being the views and attitudes of a modern social scientist? Is it a fear of the hardy and extreme revolutionary action implied by what Marx *really said* that begets this milder and more opportunistic account of what he *really meant*? Is G. D. H. Cole, as of course all Bolsheviks will affirm, a "bourgeois deviation"? Or is it just the old, all too human need for a holy book and a god-the-father that makes him treat Marx as half-awakened theologians treat the Bible? I do not know. I only know that it is a bewildering Bible that has to be patched up and emended by the believer upon every third page, and it is a sadly doddering and loose-babbling old god-the-father who never succeeded once in his life upon any cardinal point of his system in *saying what he meant*.

I prefer the Marx of the Bolsheviks, who created a naive metaphysical system according to which the world is made out of matter but this matter performs the essential function of spirit—that of going where the believer wants it to go by a "self-active" dialectic movement which constitutes its "essence"—and who stuck to this system through thick and thin. That is a Marx whom you can respect, from whom you can learn much, and whom you are not tempted to worship.

I must append a correction of Mr. Cole's allusion to my book "Marx and Lenin" as giving "a Trotzkyite interpretation" of Marxism. That is an unscholarly reference to my book and a crude injustice to Trotzky, who is an orthodox Marxist and violently opposed to my position.

MAX EASTMAN

Shorter Notices

On Our Way. By Franklin D. Roosevelt. The John Day Company. $2.50.

It is a striking illustration of the character of modern book reviewing that this volume, immediately upon its appearance, should have received the leading position and the largest amount of space in most of our so-called literary reviews or departments, although a critical examination reveals no justification for calling it important either as literature or as a contribution of new ideas or information. It is a narrative of our present President's first year in office, told largely by means of his addresses and state papers, and as such is a useful work of reference, although not for a minute comparable to the "World Almanac" or the "Statistical Abstract of the United States." The title is good but a variation of that which Art Young used for his autobiography, "On My Way." The sole basis which editors had for giving the book more than passing notice lay in the fact that its authorship was credited to the President of the United States—difficult as it is to believe that he wrote any considerable part of it other than the foreword and brief last chapter—and in the probability that the publishers would distribute a liberal sum in advertising.

Colonel Lawrence. The Man Behind the Legend. By Liddell Hart. Dodd, Mead and Company. $3.75.

Mr. Hart, despite his subtitle, makes Colonel Lawrence more legendary than ever. His explanations, tentative by his own admission, merely leave more to be explained. The book, by proving that one can be intelligent about T. E. Lawrence (or Ross, or Shaw) without understanding him, suggests that the hero of Arabia is not to be considered in the light which shines on other men. His genius, or his malady, has produced in him

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ALICE MOCKS

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a modesty which now and then is attractive but threatens to grow repulsive; and his difference from everybody else may very well turn out to seem something else besides superiority. His great episode after all was the Arabian one, and Mr. Hart has done well to concentrate on that. Mr. Hart, who knows a great deal about the art of war, decides that Colonel Lawrence is one of the great captains of all time—comparable with Marlborough and with the earlier, the better, Napoleon. This decision, based upon a study of the Arabian campaign and arrived at in spite of the fact that Colonel Lawrence fought only one regular battle, provides 300 pages of excellent reading.

The Dreamer. By Julian Green. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

Once more Julian Green's way leads among frustrated provincials, into the inner darkness of their writhing inhibitions, and once more, though with other writers such people appear as monsters, his introverted grotesques—the consumptive, erotic Manuel, the sadistic Aunt Plass, the innocent, sensitive Marie-Thérèse—retain enough normal traits to have a sympathetic, human aspect. There is nothing didactic about Mr. Green's treatment of their abnormalities; nor does he wallow as so many writers do in the emotional aberrations of his characters. His attitude and perceptions are as balanced as his well-measured sentences. In his penetration into the sickened portions of men's minds, he leaves what he finds along the way and does not attempt to clear a space about the festering spots for the sake of emphasis. But the way is shaded and tortuous, and in this book an impression of artificiality, of forced maneuvering, remains with the reader. The situations are a little too remote even on Mr. Green's assumptions. The novel is a fantasy, but despite the nostalgic purity of the style, a fantasy less inevitable than "The Closed Garden" or "The Dark Journey."

Covering Two Years. By I. V. Morris. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.

It is fairly easy, having taken for heroine a woman like Judith, so confused and tormented by her emotional background and experiences, torn between infidelity to her husband and child and fidelity to an inescapable memory, for an author to be both obvious and violent. Mr. Morris has managed to give his story composure and restraint without sacrificing the grim implications of Judith's personality. In this, his first novel, he has made a psychological study of a complex, morbid woman with commendable compression, dispassion, and intricacy. Unfortunately, apart from his central character he has not been so successful. He clears the moth-balls away from some pretty trite examples of Back Bay eccentricity and repression without clearing the air of the smell of camphor. The force of Judith's effect is spent in a setting and a style too remindful of other writers, among others of the early Mauriac, of Julian Green, and, in point of view, of Eugene O'Neill. Yet Mr. Morris's talents, freed of this too studied, too artificially literary quality, should produce riper later fruit.

Salah and His American. By Leland Hall. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

The case for freedom has not been entirely settled; at least the American in this book who hired a young Negro in the streets of Casablanca to be his servant during a visit to Marrakesh did not find it so. Salah had been born a slave and had run away from a bad master, but a kind employer was something else, was, to the consternation of the American, despite wages, a good master. The short book is rich with the sights and smells, the sounds and the heat of Marrakesh, and vivid with the subtle discord between the Westerner whose moral, political, and economic traditions forced him to free from still older traditions of bondage a fellow human being who asked only to remain a slave. The story of the relationship between the two men is one of those documents which by the combination of curious circumstance and fine writing happily elude classification and comparison. The material sounds like truth and the style reads like fiction, the effect should be an enjoyment to anyone who cares for good descriptive prose, likes able psychological studies, and can accept the fact that the fate of one rather memorable slave and not slavery is the point in question.

Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark. By Charles Morrow Wilson. Thomas Y. Crowell Company. $3.

It is a pity that the first biography of Lewis should have so much fiction in it. Mr. Wilson's manner is in general so "poetical" that when we come to particular passages we do not know what to believe. We cannot be as sure as he is, for instance, that Lewis loved Theodosia Burr Alston with a dark and lingering passion; and we are free to suspect that he has accepted the legend of Lewis's suicide because it somehow makes a better story than the equally plausible legend of his murder. The book has its value, since it quotes from documents; elsewhere, however, it lacks the air of reliability.

Drama Note

"The Milky Way" (Cort Theater) is an engagingly unpretentious farce about a simple soul who blundered into fame as a pugilist and then blundered out again before it was too late. The hero is played by Hugh O'Connell, who has shown before how amusing he can be as an amiable nit-wit, and the total result is something which almost anyone is likely to find very pleasantly absurd. Never for a moment has the author tried to rise above the elementary level of the hard-boiled farce, and he is quite unashamed when he comes to the romantic interest which has a necessary place in his formula. But the very innocence of the piece constitutes one of its charms and helps to explain why it will probably be one of the conspicuous successes of the spring. The unskilful will laugh long and loud but the judicious need find no cause to grieve. Here is a common ground upon which the two classes can meet, and for once they probably will. You may even take the children if you like.

J. W. K.

Contributors to This Issue

ERNEST GRUENING, formerly an editor of *The Nation*, was until recently editor of the New York *Post*. He attended the Pan-American Conference of last winter as adviser and is the author of "Mexico and Its Heritage."

DOUGLAS HASKELL was formerly assistant editor of the *Architectural Record*. He has written for art and architectural publications here and abroad.

JOHN A. HOBSON is one of the foremost British economists.

OSCAR LERNER, president of the Pharmacists' Union of Greater New York, was chairman of the National Conference of Employee Pharmacists' Associations.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH is an editor of *Fortune* and the author of "Conquistador."

FERNER NUHN contributes reviews and articles to various periodicals.

MAX EASTMAN was the translator of Leon Trotzky's "History of the Russian Revolution." He has recently published "Artists in Uniform."

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